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₹5K-CR PROJECT TO BOLSTER R&D IN PHARMA, MED-TECH SECTORS

The Union health ministry will soon roll out a five-year policy to boost R&D in pharma and medtech sectors. Top government sources said that around ₹5,000 crore will be spent over five years from FY24 to FY28 for the mega project. As part of this policy, the govt will establish seven centres of excellence in Ahmedabad (Gujarat), Kolkata (West Bengal), Raebareilly (Uttar Pradesh), Hajipur (Bihar), Guwahati (Assam), Hyderabad (Telangana), and Mohali (Punjab), sources said | P10



PM Narendra Modi gestures after addressing the nation on the 77th Independence Day from the ramparts of Red Fort in New Delhi on Tuesday, as helicopters shower petals on the gathering. This was his 10th consecutive I-Day address from Red Fort | P11

PM sets tone for 2024 poll

Seeks to expand OBC outreach, strengthen bond with people in I-Day speech

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR
@ New Delhi

SETTING the tone for his re-election bid in 2024, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday sought to expand his OBC outreach, solidify his bond with the masses by addressing them as family members, and called for a war against the 'three evils' of corruption, appeasement and dynastic politics.

In his 10th consecutive Independence Day speech at Red Fort, he mentioned *parivarjan* (family members) at least 50 times. In the past, he had addressed the citizens as 'my beloved brothers and sisters' or 'my dear fellow citizens'.

Seeking to expand his OBC vote bank, Modi announced the Vishwakarma Yojana, with an outlay of ₹13,000-15,000 crore, to boost the livelihood opportunities for people engaged in traditional skills like carpenters, masons and goldsmiths. The

scheme, benefiting the OBCs, will be launched on Vishwakarma Jayanti on September 17.

He also said he aims to create two crore *lakhpati didis* (millionaire sisters) by skilling them to become small entrepreneurs. Women would also be provided drone operation training for agricultural purposes.

Regarding the situation in riot-torn Manipur, the PM said peace is gradually returning to the region. "India stands with Manipur, and both the Central and the state governments are collaboratively working to uphold peace," he said, adding the entire nation shares its pain.

Expressing gratitude to the nation for voting a stable government to power at the Centre in 2014, following three decades of uncertainty, instability and political compulsions, the PM said, "You placed your trust in me. I endeavoured to live up to that trust. I pledged to reform, perform, and transform, and I

have diligently served the nation with pride."

"On the next August 15, I will speak to you from Red Fort with more self-confidence about the country's achievements, the successes of your capabilities and the progress made in fulfilling your resolutions," he said amid applause from the crowd.

In a veiled reference to the Opposition, Modi emphasised that the collective eradication of corruption, nepotism and political appeasement was imperative for the country's progress. "It is our shared responsibility to foster probity, transparency, and impartiality to elevate India into a developed nation."

Criticising the Opposition unity, the PM remarked, "These individuals absconded after misappropriating your hard-earned money... I am committed to advancing the fight against corruption."

No HC relief in LCA tech theft case

YATHIRAJU @ Bengaluru

THE Karnataka High Court has refused to quash the criminal proceedings against a 27-year-old aerospace engineering graduate who allegedly sold sensitive military technology of Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas that was planned to be used on Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA), on the Dark Web.

AMCA, a more advanced fighter than Tejas, is under de-

sign and development with Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) and Aircraft Research & Design Centre (ARDC) of HAL.

The data leaked to the Dark Web pertained to defence secrets with regard to installation of characteristics of moderate to high angles of attack concerning the aircraft, its design, fabrication, measurement and dynamic derivatives, all for enriching himself, the court noted.

Such usage of the Dark Web for defence secrets to be uploaded has a devastating effect on national security and would have destabilised the defence of the nation. The accused, Siva Rama Krishna Chennuboina, a native of Andhra Pradesh and residing at Yelahanka in Bengaluru, was a BTech graduate from Manipal University and interned at the Department of Aerospace Engineering at Indian Institute of Science (IISc).

CJI: 27 more courtrooms will come up in SC

SHRUTI KAKKAR @ New Delhi

STRESSING the need to modernise the judicial infrastructure to make the Supreme Court more accessible and inclusive, Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud on Tuesday announced the expansion of its infrastructure in two phases.

He also recalled instances of arbitrary arrests and demolition of properties of the accused, saying irrespective of the outcome of a case, the strength of the system is to grant justice. "That sense of confidence in an individual that an arbitrary arrest, a threatened demolition, if their properties are attached unlawfully, must find solace and a voice in judges of the Supreme Court," he said.

EXPRESS READ

K'taka will be made No 1 manufacturing hub: CM

Bengaluru: Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Tuesday said his government plans to double the state's industrial growth rate and transform it into No 1 manufacturing hub in Asia | P4

Gangrape: Spl police team to trace accused

Koppal: The Koppal police, who are investigating the gangrape of a 46-year-old woman, are looking at setting up a special team to nab the accused, who are said to be absconding | P5

Sulabh International founder passes away

New Delhi: Sulabh International founder and social activist Bindeshwar Pathak, a pioneer in building public toilets, died at AIIMS here due to a cardiac arrest on Tuesday, according to a close aide. He was 80 | P7

Karnataka to release 10 tmcft of water to TN

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

DEPUTY CM DK Shivakumar on Tuesday said the Karnataka government is committed to releasing 10 tmcft of Cauvery water to Tamil Nadu, which has approached the Supreme Court for the same. In the same breath, Shivakumar appealed to the Tamil Nadu government to cooperate with Karnataka in the implementation of the Mekedatu project as it would be beneficial to it too.

Addressing reporters after taking part in the Independence Day celebrations at the KPCC office, Shivakumar, who is also Minister for Water Resources, said Karnataka had released water to Tamil Nadu based on its availability while also providing water to farmers for irrigation.

Reiterating that there should be no confrontation over sharing of Cauvery water, he said water will be released based on the inflow into the reservoirs in Karnataka. "However, we are committed to releasing 10 tmcft of water to Tamil Nadu now," he added.

Expressing displeasure over Tamil Nadu not supporting the Mekedatu project, the DyCM said 400 tmcft of water flowed into the sea last year. The neighbouring state should cooperate in implementing the Mekedatu project as it would help Karnataka release water whenever there is rain deficit. "It is in times such as these that the project helps us to release water to Tamil Nadu. The Mekedatu project benefits Tamil Nadu also. Hence, it should support the reservoir project," Shivakumar said.

K'taka mulls own airports authority

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Vijayapura

MINISTER for Infrastructure Development MB Patil on Tuesday asserted that the state government is mulling over the possibilities of establishing its own airports authority on the lines of the Airports Authority of India (AAI) to operate airports being built in the state by it.

Addressing reporters here, he said handing over the airports to AAI for operation fetched no profit to the state.

CONTINUED ON: P4



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Cost of refilling water can doubles to ₹10

Power tariff increase cited for the hike; Upset citizens want water to be included as guarantee

BOSKY KHANNA @Bengaluru

THE cost of refilling a 20-litre water can has now doubled, thanks to the hike in power tariff that has affected middle-class families, slum-dwellers and those from below poverty line.

Earlier, the rate for a refill was Rs 5, but it has now gone up to Rs 10. The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike and Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board have set up water dispensing units



EXPRESS ILLUSTRATION

across the city to provide clean drinking water to citizens. The units are beneficial especially to people staying in the 110 villages of BBMP and the CMC

and TMC areas on the fringes of the city where there is no Cauvery water connection.

Zonal BBMP engineers and chief health officers have been given the task of maintaining these units. But officials in the zones said they have nothing to do with the rise in tariff as it is up to those operating the dispensers to maintain them.

"I fill water from the dispenser thrice a week. We are a family of five and I fill three cans each time. We need water for cooking and drinking. Fill-

ing each can at Rs 5 was difficult by the end of the month earlier. But now with the price hike, it is almost impossible for us to get water that frequently. We have decided to reduce water usage," said Shanthamma, a homemaker in RR Nagar. Her husband works as a labourer.

Similar is the concern of Lakshmi, another homemaker staying in Hemmigeppura. "I work as a domestic help and I need at least one can a day. I cannot spend Rs 300 a month

only on water. The government should look into this and include it under one of the guarantees," she said.

Bescom officials said these are commercial units and the hike in power tariff is applicable to them.

Santosh K, an operator manning the water dispensing unit in RR Nagar, said he was forced to increase the rate as power charges have increased. It costs a lot to pump and supply water. The cost has to be passed on to customers, he reasoned.

'NOT A CHOICE' CM for development in suburbs, activists say it's a necessity

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

WITH Chief Minister Siddaramaiah announcing during his Independence Day speech on Tuesday that the government will develop suburban townships in Devanahalli, Nelamangala, Hoskote, Doddaballapur and Magadi, many experts pointed out that it is not a new announcement. They demanded that the government first develop proper administrative infrastructure to implement the announcement.

Vikram Rai, Secretary, Bengaluru Apartment Federation, said, "Every government over the last few terms mentions the development of tier 2 and tier 3 cities and boosting infrastructure on the Bengaluru outskirts. Now, CM Siddaramaiah during his second term too has mentioned developing the peripheral areas, which is not a choice, but a necessity for the government."

He said the Bengaluru Apartment Federation draws its members mainly from Bengaluru city limits, but now, out of 1,200 members, 100 are from panchayats, where challenges like road, water, power and others needs have to be addressed. If there is better infrastructure

and administration, the issues can be solved, he added.

Activists felt that before any plans to develop suburban areas, existing slums in these places should be audited and proper planning done.

"With these areas witnessing development, there are chances of migrant labourers settling down and creating unorganised slums. All these factors should be taken into consideration and lands should be identified to provide a decent shelter to these labourers," said Issac Amrutraj of the Slum Janara Sanghatana.

Deputy Chief Minister and Bengaluru Development Minister DK Shivakumar too had mentioned

about the development of peripheral areas around Bengaluru with educational institutions and industries to arrest the population moving into core city areas. The topic was also part of discussion at Brand Bengaluru meetings. Many believe that Bengaluru is getting burdened because of people coming for education and employment from other cities. If the same infrastructure like in Bengaluru is extended to the outskirts, some amount of population could be contained, experts said.



(Left) Students carry posters of martyrs of the Armed Forces, during the 77th Independence Day celebrations, at Manekshaw Parade Ground; (Above) Citizens take a ride with national flags, in Bengaluru on Tuesday | SHASHIDHAR BYRAPPA, VINOD KUMAR T

I-Day fervour engulfs Bengaluru city

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

BENGALURU city was filled with feelings of patriotism on the occasion of the 77th Independence Day on Tuesday. The iconic Vidhana Soudha, along with many other government and private offices, were illuminated with tri-coloured lights, attracting hundreds of visitors.

As many commuters chose to catch a glimpse of the stunning Vidhana Soudha lit with the Tricolour, the stretch of road near it witnessed traffic jams. Autos, two-wheelers and other vehicles were seen decorated with Tricolour and balloons.

The Air Force Station, Yelahanka, organised a special

event as a part of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav'. In the presence of personnel and their families, Air Commodore Rajesh Bhandari, Air Force Officer Commanding, Air Force Station, Bengaluru, hoisted the national flag at the Depot Sports Ground, which was decorated with tri-coloured balloons and banners, while patriotic songs were also played.

At Canadian International School, students and teachers of 30 different nationalities came together to celebrate Independence Day. "As home and host nation to this diverse community of over 30 different nationalities, it is important for us to remember the heroes and freedom fighters whose com-

mitment and sacrifice allow us to enjoy the lives we lead today. We continue to be inspired by their enduring legacy each year," said a release.

Nanjundaswamy, former joint director of Public Instruction, Government of Karnataka, a 102-year-old cancer survivor, hoisted the Tricolour at Manipal Hospital, Old Airport Road, alongside his treating doctor Dr Shabber Zaveri, Chairman HOD and Consultant - Surgical Oncology.

Round Table India, a youth organisation that is focused on nation-building and striving to promote 'service through fellowship' and Ladies Circle India - Area 6, organised the 13th Edition of 'Freedom Drive' in

the city. Over 30 cars participated in the drive, with the chairman of Round Table India - Area 6, Prateek Kumar and the chairperson of the Ladies Circle India - Area 6, Sivaranjani, taking part. They also honoured freedom fighters on the occasion.

Educational institutions like Narayana Educational Institutions organised colourful fancy dress competitions to promote the values of unity, diversity, and mutual respect among students. Lalbagh was brimming with visitors on Tuesday, who arrived to see the flower show. Tourist hubs across the city like Cubbon Park and Bannerghatta Zoo were crowded, since it was a holiday.

IISc DEVELOPS AUTOPILOT SYSTEM FOR DRONES

PURAN CHOUDHARY @Bengaluru

WITH the exponential rise in drone usage across sectors like industrial applications, agriculture, logistics and defence, the need for indigenous avionics systems has become crucial. In order to reduce dependence on foreign drone technology the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) has made a significant achievement in the field of unmanned aerial systems.

The Artificial Intelligence and Robotics Laboratory (AIRL) at IISc announced that the team has successfully developed an indigenous industrial-grade autopilot system for drones. The team said this achievement is the initial step towards the indigenization of avionics systems for drones in India. This feat was possible through the utilization of Indian-made Vega Microcontrollers, developed by the

Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC), as part of the Digital India RISC-V Program (DIR-V).

The indigenously developed technology will help reduce the reliance on microcontrollers in future drone avionics projects. Professor Suresh Sundaram, Associate Professor at the Department of Aerospace Engineering, who headed the project said, "Our autopilot system,

powered by Vega Microcontrollers, showcases the immense potential of homegrown solutions in the unmanned aerial systems domain. We are confident that this breakthrough will pave the way for further advancements in this field and contribute to the growth of the drone ecosystem in India."

India's most used drone technologies which include an unmanned aerial system (UAV) that

can help run a basic operation system and forward data to a navigation control unit, are imported from China, US, Israel, and several European countries.

The reason for India's slow progress in this sector is due to the non-availability of essential indigenous electronics components like microcontrollers and sensors at a reasonable cost. The country also lacks a skilled workforce working on the UAV sys-

tems. Using imported tech comes with major security concerns such as hacking and data manipulation. The country has been on a steady growth towards chip manufacturing and CDAC is a ray of hope in developing world-class microcontrollers. "This move will cut millions of dollars worth of electronics import over the years and make India self-reliant in terms of UAV technology," said the laboratory.

Daily Starscope

PETER VIDAL
16th August: One ongoing buzz amongst scientists, which I have mentioned before, is that the existence of ice on the Moon could make it much easier for humans to live there because of ready supplies of water. But what would a horoscope set for the Moon look like? Almost exactly the same as one for the earth, as it happens, with one huge difference - there would be no Moon in it!

ARIES (Mar 21-Apr 20)

Someone at home needs a good talking to, and if you don't do it, nobody else will. This is, by the way, a good day to check up on all travel arrangements, mainly because your intentions may have moved on. There might also be something you have overlooked, perhaps something quite important.

TAURUS (Apr 21-May 21)

You may have good reason to question other people's priorities, especially if you feel their ethical stance leaves something to be desired. You may also get in touch with family members who are far away, or engineer a reunion between friends who may have fallen out.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21)

This is an extremely useful moment to sort out all financial plans, although I hope you don't slip back into the confusion of the past. You have about three days in which you may take very valuable steps to boost your material security, after which you'll have a fresh chance in another month.

CANCER (June 22-July 23)

On the psychological level everything hinges around how much you value yourself, and where you see your true worth. Sort this out and you'll get rid of several bad habits which have been distorting your ability to deal with money reasonably and rationally.

LEO (July 24-Aug 23)

The overall emphasis remains highly pleasurable, but the t's probably because you can enjoy activities and experiences which leave less or people feeling worn out and weary. Unlike many people, you have a higher regard for the virtues of hard work. Keep yourself busy.

VIRGO (Aug 24-Sept 23)

If you settle outstaring issues at home once and for all, you should then find that more pleasurable possibilities are opened up. A cultural outing seems appropriate, but any activity which broadens your horizons and adds to the sum total of human happiness will be worthwhile.

LIBRA (Sept 24-Oct 23)

It's important that you open a dialogue. If you have an interview to attend or must put over your point of view in any other way, the planets are on your side. Just don't let differences over money cloud the real issues. And do listen to friends who know you better than you know yourself.

SCORPIO (Oct 24-Nov 22)

For once in your life it's very hopeful that your professional achievements and worldly ambitions will be properly rewarded. This is no more than you deserve, and many of you have awaited an extremely long time. If there is a further delay, don't despair, but keep your hopes up.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23-Dec 22)

You still have the power to control and influence everything that happens at home, so don't squander this valuable opportunity. Other people are very much of one mind, and so you'll need to have your wits about you, finding a way forward which fulfils everybody's wishes.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23-Jan 20)

You may be in a haze today, but not matter. By this evening you should once again have your finger on the pulse, and nobody will be able to pull the wool over your eyes again at least not for another week! Make a point of talking to people whose opinions are usually ignored.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21-Feb 19)

This could be a sociable day, one when you may easily make the most of friendly advances. There are further indications that you'll need to spend some time alone. Some of you will even shut yourselves away, tending your sensitive emotions and oh-so-vulnerable feelings!

PISCES (Feb 20-Mar 20)

There is something to be admired about the way you instinctively seem to know what other people are feeling. Colleagues will be in need of your sympathy today, even if it appears as though you otherwise. You may stop, listen, and offer your wisest advice.

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			8			
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	13	14		15		
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CROSS WORD
ACROSS
1 Penny put on weight in spring (6)
4 Stewed mince; a country habit (6)
9 Officer on his own in pass (7)
10 Come again about the dog (5)
11 He plays a tiny part that may be superfluous (5)
12 Weary at first but ready to appear in public (7)
13 Time of arrival (4,2,5)
18 More seasonal type of artist (7)
20 Country doctors are OK (5)
22 Do some coaching - a track is needed for it (5)
23 Cooked pie and preserve for a gourmet (7)
24 Drives cattle (6)
25 Doesn't differ in meagre essentials (6)
YESTERDAY'S SOLUTIONS
Across: 1 However, 5 Brief, 8 Plainwilde, 9 Yoda, 10 Gracide, 11 Mayday, 12 Screw, 15 Round up, 17 Nicks, 19 Hunting season, 20 Sawed, 21 Tunisia.

JUMBLE UNSCRAMBLE THESE JUMBLES, ONE LETTER TO EACH SQUARE, TO FORM FOUR ORDINARY WORDS.
BY DAVID L. HOYT AND JEFF KNUREK
LWUOD
BOTIR
SPLATO
ZONREF
THE
Answers tomorrow!
Yesterday's Jumbles: QUOTA PLANK GROWTH SERMON
Answer: The concealed archer who thought he was better than everyone else was - "ARROW-GANT"

Covid distancing made kids less immune, say doctors

'After pandemic, children getting infected severely with many viruses'

NAMRATA SINDWANI @Bengaluru

PEDIATRICIANS have attributed the rise in cases of dengue and viral pneumonia cases among children to poor immunity for emerging viruses because of less exposure during the pandemic years.

Dr Rajath Athreya, senior consultant and head of department (paediatrics and neonatology), Sakra World Hospital, explained, "Covid gave us a period where social distancing led to children not getting exposed to infections. Otherwise, they would have developed some sort of immunity. Now children are seen getting affected more severely with any virus that comes into circulation every 2-3 weeks."

Over the last few weeks, an average of ten children suffering from dengue are treated every day. Of them, two need hospital admission. Dr Athreya said five to ten pneumonia cases are being diagnosed daily with one or two cases needing admission.

The changing weather conditions have led to the emergence of adenovirus and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) cases.

Dr SR Lakshmi, senior specialist paediatrician at KC General Hospital, told TNIE that the rise is being monitored since mid-July. Of the total 150 patients visiting the paediatric OPD ward every day, 50 are seen to be suffering from dengue-like infection. The 36-bed paediatric ward has 50 per cent occupancy with such cases and the remaining with viral pneumonia cases.

Children with both dengue and viral pneumonia are seen severely getting affected lately, doctors said. Dr Rajath said that pre-Covid, the intensity of the infection among children would be much milder but now they are seen severely symptomatic with sore throat, high fever, cough and breathing issues.

Girl gets dengue, faces multiple organ failure

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

A simple case of dengue turned out to be so severe that a 26-year-old girl was diagnosed with dengue haemorrhagic shock and multiple organ failure.

Like any other dengue case, the girl was admitted to a Bengaluru hospital with fever and low blood platelet count of 15,000 in July. The initial treatment caused her fever to subside. However, her blood pressure along with her platelet count kept dropping leading to altered level of consciousness and complications like bleeding from the mouth and vagina requiring immediate attention and critical care management. She was referred to Fortis Hospital, Bannerghatta Road, where she was diagnosed with dengue haemorrhagic shock and multiple organ failure (deranged liver and kidney function).

It is a serious illness that can cause fluid to leak from the blood vessels into the body, leading to symptoms like breathing difficulty, low blood pressure, and abdominal pain. It can also cause bleeding, liver damage, confusion and heart problems.

The girl was kept on ventilator support for two weeks as she suffered from severe Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS), a condition that causes fluid to build up in the lungs and oxygen is cut off to the organs. The doctors ensured that she successfully underwent a tracheostomy and an organ transplant too. Though she was discharged, it is expected that she will take around three months to regain strength completely.

Retd PSI held for sexual assault on 7-year-old girl

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

A 74-year-old retired police sub-inspector (PSI) was arrested on charges of sexually assaulting a seven-year-old girl. The incident took place in Shivajinagar police station limits on Monday.

The accused has been identified as Abdul Hafiz. Police said Hafiz had rented out the first floor of his house where the girl lived with her parents.

On Monday, the girl went to the ground floor to pick up

some toys when Hafiz allegedly dragged her to his house and sexually assaulted her.

The girl then told the parents about the incident. "The parents immediately lodged a complaint and the accused was arrested. Both the accused and the victim have been subjected to medical tests and the statement of the girl has been recorded," the police said.

The Shivajinagar police have booked Hafiz under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act. Further investigations are on.

Two killed, 4 injured in two accidents

Bengaluru: A 22-year-old woman died and four others were injured when two bikes collided on Kolar highway in Hoskote traffic police limits on Tuesday. The deceased, Yashoda, from Gadag, was working in a private firm. She was riding triples with two friends. She died on the spot. In another accident, Adil (25), from Bihar, was killed when two bikes collided in Devanahalli taluk.

30 gold biscuits seized

The Air Intelligence Unit at KIA on Tuesday seized 30 gold biscuits weighing 600 gm from a passenger from Kolkata. He had concealed them in his rectum. He arrived on Air Asia flight 15 1536.



AMONG THE GREATS

Floral tributes being paid to Krantiveera Sangolli Rayanna on his 226th birth anniversary near the city railway station on Tuesday | NAGARAJA GADEKAL

HC: Lives can be saved if LGBTs treated as normal

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

PRECIOUS lives would not be lost if every citizen treated persons belonging to the LGBT community as normal human beings, the Karnataka High Court said. Justice M Nagaprasanna made the observation while rejecting a petition filed by three accused, questioning a case registered against them by the Bengaluru police for allegedly harassing and abetting the suicide of one of their colleagues, Vivek Raj, who was an LGBT.

The three accused are Malathy SB, deputy general manager (marketing), Kumar Suraj, vice-president (human resources) and Nitish Kumar, assistant manager (marketing), Lifestyle International. They were booked under Sections 306 and 34 of the IPC following a complaint filed by the Whitefield Police.

Vivek Raj (35), who was a bachelor of design from the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), Bengaluru, was working as manager,

visual merchandising, at the company since September 2022 in Bengaluru.

"The deceased belongs to the LGBT community. The sensitivity of them being ostracised pervades in their psyche. Therefore, such people must be treated with all love and affection. If every citizen would treat such citizens with all love and care, as is done to a normal human, precious lives would not be lost. Unfortunately, the life of a youth is lost in the case at hand, all for the prima facie allegations pointing at the sexual orientation of the deceased," the court said.

The deceased committed suicide on June 3, 2023, and the crime was registered the very next day. The accused moved the court on June 7, 2023. The court observed that if the accused have played an active role in tarnishing or destroying the self-esteem or self-respect of a hypersensitive person, they would definitely become guilty of commission of abetment to suicide.

Fight among students halts traffic in Kaggadaspura

S LALITHA @Bengaluru

A major brawl broke out inside the BEML Township at Jagadish Nagar in Kaggadaspura on Monday evening when three teenage school students tried to beat up another from a different school allegedly over a girl.

A relative came to the rescue of the victim, and thrashed the boys with a belt in full public view bringing traffic to a halt on the main road. It took a little time for gutsy voices in the public to stop the beating and call the cops.

HAL police confirmed the

ruckus among the school boys and cited a love angle to it.

TNIE visited the spot on Tuesday and spoke to residents who witnessed it. One of them, requesting anonymity, said, "I was sleeping around 3.15 pm yesterday (Monday) when I heard loud noises outside and asked my wife to go check if anything was amiss. When she did not return for some time and the noise only intensified, I stepped out to check and saw three boys, who seemed to be in the 14-15 age group, being hit with a belt by an adult. Some residents from the BEML quarters here had come out of their

homes and were watching the scene along with passersby on the road. I requested the man repeatedly to stop beating the boys as they were minors and to leave it to the cops to redress any issues. A few others seconded me and the individual stopped his assault. Someone then called the cops."

Sharing details he had gathered from the crowd, he said three boys belonging to the same school had confessed that it was the third time they jointly attacked the teenager from a different school. "They also conceded that they had used a knife in an attempt to stab him during

the second fight as spelled out by the victim. Only after the confirmation was obtained from them, the relative accompanying the victim decided to thrash them," he added.

The cops cleared the crowd who had brought traffic to a standstill. They later pacified the students and the adult involved in the beating.

An official complaint is yet to be recorded in this connection as any such action could affect the future of the students, said a cop. "We have asked the parents of the boys to come to the HAL police station on Wednesday."

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Sl. No.	Name and Address of the Borrower, Co-borrower/Guarantor/Mortgagor	Loan Account No. and Loan Amount(s)	Details of the Security to be Enforced	Demand Notice date	Amount Due in Rs.
1	1. Mr. Basavaraj V Tatawati, No.534, Paranjyothi, Bhavani Park, Vidya Nagar, Hubli-580021. Also at: Partner, M/s. Super Lubes, Plot No.25, Survey No.473, Opp. to FCI, Bhairidevarkoppa, Hubli-580025. Also at: Flat No.105, I Floor, Rudrakash Residency, Bannerghatta Road, Guttigere Post, Bangalore-560083. (Borrower & Mortgagor) Addressee No.1. 2. M/s. Super Lubes, Rep by Its Partner, Mr. Basavaraj V Tatawati, Plot No.25, Survey No.473, Opp. to FCI, Bhairidevarkoppa, Hubli-580025 (Co-Borrower) Addressee No.2 3. Mrs. Paranjyothi Tatawati, No.534, Paranjyothi, Bhavani Park, Vidya Nagar, Hubli-580021. Also at: M/s. Super Lubes, Plot No.25, Survey No.473, Opp. to FCI, Bhairidevarkoppa, Hubli-580025 (Co-Borrower) Addressee No.3	Loan Account No. 809001582481 & Loan Amount: Rs.70,00,000/-	Apartment/Flat bearing No.105, in the First Floor, with a super built up area of 1823 Sq.Ft, consisting of 3 bed rooms with 2 attached bathrooms, hall, dining hall, kitchen, one common bath room/toilet of vitrified tile flooring, UPVC windows, Sal wood frames and flush doors, in the apartment known as "SRI RUDRAKSHI RESIDENCY", together with 797.23 Sq.Ft of undivided share of right, title and interest on the property bearing Sy.No.54/1, measuring 05 Guntas, Sy.No.54/2 measuring 09 Guntas and Sy.No.54/3 measuring 15 Guntas in total measuring 00 Acres 29 Guntas, situated in Kalena Agrahara Village, Hulimavu Group Panchayath, Begur Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, Bangalore and the exclusive right to own one covered car parking space vide No.105, inclusive of proportionate right to use in common area such as passage, staircase and other areas of common use with concealed wiring together with specifications. East by: Private property belonging to Church; West by: Road connecting Bannerghatta Main Road and property belonging to Sri.Anthonappa; North by: Property belonging to Camphor factory; South by: Property belonging to Sri. Anthonappa. The property belongs to Mr. Basavarau V Tatawati.	08.08.2023	Rs. 53,93,686.74 as on 08.08.2023
2	1. M/s. S.L.Interiors, Rep by Its Prop: Mr. K.Ajay, No.20, II Main Road, Jalahalli Villa, Near Jalahalli Govt School, Bangalore-560013 (Borrower) Addressee No.1 2. Mr. K.Arjun, No.20, II Main Road, Jalahalli Villa, Near Jalahalli Govt. School, Bangalore-560013. (Co-Borrower) Addressee No.2 3. Mrs. M.Jayalakshmi, No.20, II Main Road, Jalahalli Villa, Near Jalahalli Govt School, Bangalore-560013 (Co-Borrower & Mortgagor) Addressee No.3	Loan Account No. 809002949870 & Loan Amount: Rs.30,30,000/-	All that piece and parcel of property bearing Municipal No.20, PID No.1-2-20, measuring 19'35 Sq.Ft situated at Jalahalli Village, Yeshwanthpura Hobli, Bengaluru North Taluk, Bengaluru, now come under the limits of BBMP and bounded on the East by: Property belong to Mylaramma; West by: Road; North by: Property belong to Beerasandra; South by: Road. The Property belongs to Mrs. M.Jayalakshmi.	04.08.2023	Rs. 30,09,484.25 as on 28-07-2023
3	Mr. Manish Kumar, #201, Airview Homes, I Cross B-Bik, Vinayaka Nagar, Bangalore-560017. Also at: M/s. Anz Information Technology, Embassy Golf Links Business, Bangalore-560071. ...Borrower, Mortgagor and Guarantor	Loan Account No. 9239275 & Loan Amount: Rs.41,22,944/-	SCHEDULE 'A' PROPERTY (Description of the entire property on which Apartment Complex is constructed):- All that piece and parcel of immovable property comprising of converted land in Sy. No. 2/1(Now renumbered as Sy. No.2/1-A) measuring 01 Acre 20 Gls., bearing Khatha/Property No.2987/1, 2/1 of Doddakannalli village Panchayath, situated at Kasavanahalli Village, VathurHobli, Bangalore East Taluk, Bangalore District; (duly converted from agricultural use to non-agricultural residential purpose by means of Order No. BDIs./ALNS(E)/VB/SR/250/2003-04 dated 20-08-2004 passed by the Special Deputy Commissioner, Bangalore District.) and bounded on: East by: A.R.Shivarama Reddy's Property and Road, West by: Property owned by Mr. Rama Prasad, North by: Property owned by Mr. Rama Prasad, South by: Road. Along with rights of way, water, sanitary, easementary and all other rights and appurtenances thereto. SCHEDULE 'B' PROPERTY:- All that piece and parcel of right, title and interest in the 774 Sq.Ft. Undivided share in Schedule 'A' Property being the corresponding undivided interest in respect of Schedule-C Apartment. SCHEDULE 'C' PROPERTY (Description of the Apartment Unit/Flat herein conveyed to Purchaser):- All that piece and parcel of the immovable property comprising in one Residential Flat/Apartment Unit bearing Flat No.G-02, measuring super built up area of 1541 Sq.Ft. Situated in Ground Floor, Aster-Block, along with one covered Car Parking Space in the basement floor, in the residential apartment complex "MANAR SILVER SHADOWS" constructed over the Schedule-A Property.	01.08.2023	Rs. 20,29,888.20 as on 25-07-2023

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Chief Minister Siddaramaiah inspects a guard of honour during the 77th Independence Day celebrations at Manekshaw Parade Ground in Bengaluru on Tuesday. (Right) The CM unfurls the Tricolour | SHASHIDHAR BYRAPPA



Revamp of industrial policy to make state No 1 manufacturing hub in Asia

Siddu: We have set a goal of achieving 15-16% growth rate in the coming days

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

CHIEF Minister Siddaramaiah on Tuesday said that his government has an ambitious plan to double the state's industrial growth rate and transform it into No 1 manufacturing hub in Asia.

Delivering his Independence Day speech, he said, "In the last 10 years, the state's industrial sector registered a growth rate of 9.3%. We have set a goal of achieving 15-16% growth rate in the coming days. This needs an investment of about Rs 1.4 lakh crore annually and will help generate 14 lakh new jobs."

He said initiatives to revamp the state's industrial policy to make it more progressive, to set up world class industrial infrastructure, digital service deliv-

'Idea of five guarantees is to ensure social justice'

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said the idea behind the implementation of five guarantees -- Shakti, Gruha Jyothi, Anna Bhagya, Gruha Lakshmi and Yuva Nidhi -- is to ensure social justice. People are in distress due to price rise, unemployment, corruption, discrimination in the name of caste and religion, and poverty. Hence, his government adopted the "Universal Basic Income" policy and introduced the five guarantees to improve the economic status of the people, Siddaramaiah said. **ENS**

ery system, best-in-class investment promotion agency, ensure future-ready talent pool, and to foster collaboration and implement forward-thinking policies will be taken.

He said that his government will focus more on aerospace and defense, electronic components, core industries and warehousing and logistics sectors to boost the state's GDP. It

will also focus on future mobility, green energy, drone technology, industrial robots, semiconductor, and med and space technologies.

The CM said efforts will be made to ensure that Artificial Intelligence (AI) did not affect employment generation.

Stating that Karnataka pays over Rs 4 lakh crore in the form of taxes and duties to the Cen-

tre, he said the state, in turn, gets only Rs 50,000 crore. "Karnataka will be the richest state if we get what we deserve. Despite this challenging situation, we are complying with fiscal discipline," he added.

Expressing concern over increasing intolerance in society, he called upon the people to defeat the nefarious designs of certain sections to foment trouble and spread disharmony among the people. "The government will not tolerate hate speech and false news on social media. It will also not tolerate moral policing and goondaism," he said.

The CM said that his government is committed to utilising the state's share of Cauvery water. "We will mobilise resources for the same," he added.

Intent of Statute to be read out in all schools: Minister

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Shivamogga

ACTION is being taken to read out the intent of the Constitution every day in schools during prayers to understand the significance of the Statute, said Education Minister and district in-charge minister Madhu S Bangarappa during the 77th Indian Independence Day celebrations here on Tuesday.

Bangarappa said he has directed officials to ensure proper facilities, including books, uniforms and shoes, to government school students. Two eggs per week will be given to students up to tenth standard, which will commence from next week. Second PU students will be given the option of two supplementary examinations which would help them join further studies without los-

ing a year. Steps are being taken to recruit teachers and to construct new classrooms, he said.

On land issues concerning Sharavathi evacuees and bagair hukum farmers, he said that both Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar are keen to find a solution. Both forest and revenue departments have to work towards this, he said.

Authorities have been told to release monetary relief to the people who have suffered crop loss and damage to their houses due to heavy showers, he said.

Special attention is being given to commence Ayush University. The government is committed to upgrade the existing libraries in rural areas into e-libraries to help bring rural people to the mainstream, he added.



Education Minister Madhu S Bangarappa hands over a trophy to the best parade team from Government Bala Mandir in Shivamogga on Tuesday

BJP slams plan to scrap NEP, DyCM hits back

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

OPPOSITION BJP leaders slammed the state government's decision to scrap the National Education Policy (NEP) from the next academic year as was announced by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Monday.

Former chief minister and senior BJP leader Basavaraj Bommai said it is not proper to take such a decision for political reasons and the government must reconsider its stand. He said it is not right to take such decisions only for political reasons and ignoring the future of students.

Bommai said Dr K Kasturirangan, who had drafted the Karnataka State Education Policy, had also drafted the NEP. "How can our students compete if we do not have a system that is prevalent across the country? It will be a big setback for students from rural areas. The government should reconsider its decision or the BJP educational institutions and parents have to protest against this," he said.

He also hit out at AICC General Secretary Randeep Singh Surjewala for calling BJP supporters 'Rakshas' (demons). "It is an insult to the citizens of the country," he said.

Deputy CM DK Shivakumar hit back by terming the NEP as "Nagpur Education Policy". The policy furthers the BJP's political agenda and there is no need for it, he said. He also questioned why the BJP governments in other states have not implemented NEP. In its election manifesto, the Congress announced that NEP will be withdrawn. "It is a state subject, let them not worry about it," Shivakumar said.

RETORT TO CM

HDK: Voice of people, not any party

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

HITTING back at Chief Minister Siddaramaiah for calling him "spokesperson of the BJP", JDS leader HD Kumaraswamy said he is the voice of Kannadigas and not any party.

During the Independence Day celebration at the JDS office here on Tuesday, the former CM said people had decided to keep him in the Opposition and he will continue to be their voice by questioning the wrongdoings of the government. Continuing his attack against the Congress, Kumaraswamy said the party's 'Garibi Hatao' has remained a slogan and ridiculed that inequality was its guarantee. Further, he said there was only one East India Company before independence, but today, there were many in the form of national parties that are looting people.

Later, speaking to reporters, the JDS legislative party leader said the state government's corruption cases are unfolding every day like a movie sequel. "The day of the curtains coming down on this government is not very far," he added.

He also asked whether Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who accused Kumaraswamy of making 'hit and run' allegations and that he carried an empty pen drive, was daring enough to take action against the concerned if he produced the evidence.

On the Tamil Nadu government moving Supreme Court seeking water, the former CM said, "They (Congress) had done Mekedatu padayatra. Let's wait and watch what they will do."

Meanwhile, Deputy CM DK Shivakumar told reporters that all leaders and parties are free to disclose whatever evidence they had before the public.



Congress finalises names for three MLC posts

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

THE Congress high command has cleared the names of MLCs for nomination to three vacant posts in the Legislative Council. Sources said the names of former minister and actress Umashree, former minister M R Seetharam and former En-

forcement Directorate (ED) officer Sudham Das were finalised to be nominated to the Upper House. Former Union minister K Rahman Khan's son Mansur Ali Khan's name was also doing the rounds for the nomination.

Umashree served as minister for women and child development and Kannada and culture

in the Siddaramaiah government from 2013 to 2018.

Sudham Das joined the Congress recently. There was some opposition within the party over nominating him to the Upper House, sources said and added that Das had the backing of both Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.



RSS Sarsanghchalak Dr Mohan Bhagwat arrives for the Independence Day celebrations at Vasavi Convention Centre in Basavanagudi, Bengaluru, on Tuesday. The event was organised by Samarth Bharata | EXPRESS

IN THE LIMELIGHT

BJP's efforts to pull down Cong govt will come to nought, says Digvijay

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Hubballi

NO effort by the BJP to pull down the state government will bear fruit as the people have given a huge mandate to the Congress, said senior Congress leader Digvijay Singh on Tuesday. Singh, who was in the city to take part in the Independence Day celebration hosted by the district unit of the party, told reporters that the BJP is said to be making efforts to topple the government using the '40% commission' money. Since people have blessed the party with enough seats, every attempt of the BJP

is sure to fail, he added.

Ridiculing the saffron party, the former Madhya Pradesh chief minister said despite getting rejected by people, BJP leaders have not learnt a lesson yet. The BJP government in Madhya Pradesh too indulged in largescale corruption with charges of '50% commission' against it.

Stating that the mandate given to the Congress in Karnataka has given a new direction to national politics, the Rajya Sabha member said the Congress be-

lieves in unity, but the BJP is injecting poison into the mind of people on the basis of religion.

On the Manipur violence, Singh held Chief Minister Biren Singh responsible for the volatile situation in the northeastern state. "Riots in the state were the result of the BJP's politics of creating a divide among people on the basis of caste and religion. The innocent people of the state are suffering a lot," he added.



Hassan Airport to be ready by Dec

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Hassan

THE much-awaited Hassan Airport, which is coming up near Bhuvanahalli, will be completed by December this year, said district in-charge Minister KN Rajanna on Tuesday.

Unfurling the Tricolour during the 77th Independence Day celebrations, he said over 70% of works, including the runway, have been completed in the Rs 200-crore project that was started three years ago.

He said the state government is committed to completing ongoing projects in a phased manner and the guarantee schemes will be implemented effectively. "Chief Minister Siddaramaiah will launch the Gruha Lakshmi guarantee scheme on August 27. The government has also released Rs 5 crore to pay compensation to families affected by the recent rain in the district," he added.

Rajanna said the government is committed to overall development of the state and uplift of the downtrodden through social justice.

Deputy Commissioner C Satyabama, ZP CEO Poornima and Superintendent of Police Hariram Shankar were present.

Feasibility of airport authority to be assessed, says MB Patil

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

HENCE, the government has plans to operate the airports on its own.

"When the state government is funding the airports, then why should AAI operate them. Moreover, the state has to bear the operation charges. Instead, the government can operate the airports coming up at Vijayapura, Shivamogga, Raichur and Ballari on its own," he said.

Patil, however, said that before taking any decision, a detailed assessment of its pros and cons, feasibility, and legal hurdles would be made.

On AAI granting the operational part of Mangalore Airport to Adani group, the minister wondered why AAI handed it over to Adani. "The state government handed over the operational part to AAI. But in turn, AAI gave it to Adani. If it had to be given to Adani, then the government could have done it directly without giving it to AAI," he said.

Claiming that he is not happy with the decision, Patil said that he has asked the officials to study the terms and condi-



Minister MB Patil inspects a guard of honour during the Independence Day celebration in Vijayapura on Tuesday

tions on which the operation of Mangalore Airport was given to AAI.

He said the state government is in talks with multinational companies such as FOXCONN, IBC, Marubeni, etc., on establishment of their manufacturing units worth millions of dollars in Karnataka.

Earlier, Patil, who is also the district in-charge minister, hoisted the tricolour and addressed the gathering. Deputy Commissioner T Bhoobalan and ZP CEO Rahul Shinde were among the officials present.

PWD will clear ₹6kcr pending bills step by step: Satish Jarkiholi

Belagavi: Bills of contractors worth Rs 6,000 crore are pending with the Public Works Department, and they will be settled step by step in the next two years, said PWD Minister Satish Jarkiholi. Speaking to reporters on Tuesday, he said, "The delay in payments to contractors was due to the mistakes of the previous government. It will take two years to resolve the issue." Asked about the government stand on dividing Belagavi district, he said there is a proposal before the government to create two more districts -- Chikkodi and Gokak -- by bifurcating Belagavi. "The government will discuss the matter and take a decision in the coming days," he said. When asked if funds for developmental works and projects announced earlier are being diverted for the guarantee schemes, he said this is a wrong perception. **ENS**



Restore all subjects to state list: Stalin

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Chennai

CHIEF Minister MK Stalin on Tuesday gave a call to restore all subjects, including education, that have a direct bearing on people's lives, back to the State List from the Concurrent List to help abolish 'cruel exams' like NEET.

The CM, during his Independence Day address, said late leaders like 'Arignar' Anna and 'Kalaingar' M Karunanidhi raised their voice to protect the autonomy of states within the federal setup of the

Indian Union.

In 1976, Indira Gandhi government, during Emergency, transferred subjects under State List -- education, forestry, wildlife and bird protection, administration of justice, and weights and measures -- to Concurrent List in the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution to enable both Union and state governments to enact laws on the subjects. Since then, several entities, particularly Dravidian parties, have been demanding that the subject of education be transferred back to the State List. Scrapping NEET is one of

the key electoral promises of the DMK and it could not be achieved so far as the NEET Exemption Bill is under the consideration of the President.

Stalin also made several welfare announcements including filling 55,000 vacancies across government departments, establishment of Kalaingar Centenary Park on 6.09 acres at a cost of Rs. 25 crore on Cathedral Road in Chennai, scheme to provide skill development training to 10,000 ex-servicemen at a cost of Rs.7 crore to help them get jobs, and monthly pension hike from Rs.10,000

to Rs.11,000 for freedom fighters and their families.

The CM also said 141 women have so far benefitted under Rs.1 lakh subsidy scheme for buying autorickshaws, and the scheme would be offered to 500 women, including transpersons, this year.

Tamil Nadu was the first state to sow the seeds of freedom struggle and DMK never lagged behind in honouring our freedom fighters, the CM said, explaining the measures implemented for the welfare of freedom fighters and their families.

76 yrs on, manual scavenging still prevalent across K'taka

BALA CHAUHAN @Bengaluru

IN 1972, the Karnataka government had constituted a committee under the chairmanship of IPD Salappa to study the living and working conditions of sweepers and scavengers in the state. The committee submitted its final report in 1976. "Based on the interim recommendations of this committee, a circular was issued, calling for a ban on the practice of carrying night soil as head load or manual handling thereof by August 15, 1973," stated Siddhartha KJ in his seminal study, 'Manual Scavenging in Karnataka - A Situation Assessment' in January 2020, conducted under the aegis of the Safai Karmachari Kavalu Samithi (SKKS), Karnataka.

Fifty years on, as India celebrates its 76th Independence Day, the practice of manual scavenging continues across districts in Karnataka.

"There are 7,449 identified manual scavengers in Karnataka," KB Obalesh, state convener, SKKS, told *TNIE*. Manual scavenging is a banned but prevalent practice, of manually cleaning, carrying, disposing or any other form of handling of uncomposted human excreta. It is one of the most stigmatized practices among the category of occupations classified as 'unclean' occupations in India.

In 1993, Parliament passed The Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (EMSCDL) (Prohibition) Act, 1993, which proscribed the construction of dry latrines and employment of persons to clean them. "The definition of manual scaveng-



ing included only cleaning of dry latrines, that is, handling night soil, and excluded from its purview other forms of manual scavenging like cleaning open drains, open defecation, sewer lines etc," Siddhartha stated in his paper.

The Act had to be adopted and implemented by the states. "Few adopted it and none implemented it. After the complete failure of EMSCDL, in 2013, the Parliament passed The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation (PEMSR) Act. The Act prohibits any construction or continued maintenance of insanitary latrines (ILs), which requires human excreta to be cleaned or otherwise handled manually, either situ, or in an open drain or pit into which the excreta is discharged or flushed out before the excreta fully decomposes.

A recent study carried out by the National Law School of India University (NLSIU) reported that 92.33 per cent of workers engaging in manual scavenging across 30 districts of Karnataka were Dalits, and 3.3pc belonged to the Scheduled Tribes (ST). Among those

surveyed, about 74pc belonged to the Madiga community.

"There are 7,449 manual scavengers in Karnataka, but in 10 out of 18 districts, the district administration had shown zero manual scavengers during the 2020-21 survey," said Obalesh. He explained that as per standard operating procedure (SOP) for the survey of manual scavengers, it was incumbent upon the survey committee selected by the district administration to first do a survey of ILs in their districts.

"The select committee was mandated to have one person from the community of manual scavengers on board, but the survey was done without any member from the community. The survey concluded that there were no insanitary latrines," added Obalesh. "In eight districts where the community of manual scavengers is strong, they identified 2,400 manual scavengers. Because of the improper survey in 10 districts, thousands of manual scavengers were left out of the scheme of rehabilitation, which includes free education, compensation and transition to alternative livelihood professions," he added.

Manual scavenging is often a hereditary occupation, and is 'inherited' from one generation to the next. "Because those who carry out this work belong to the most marginalized section of society, the elimination of manual scavenging has not gained priority within government, policy-making and civil society circles. As a society, we want cleanliness around us, but we don't stop to ask who will clean the waste," asserted Siddhartha.

'Accused used Dark Web to leak data'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

IN 2015-16, Chennuboina went on in-plant training and project work at ARDC, HAL, where the sensitive work was being carried out. He then returned to IISc's Aerospace Engineering Department for two stints of internship in 2016 and 2017. A project related to AMCA was allotted to this department while he was interning there.

In 2021, the Ministry of Defence suspected that there had been some foul play by persons in ADA who leaked the data. ADA then complained to cybercrime police on September 17, 2021, following which Chennuboina was arrested on April 18, 2022. The Union Government had submitted before the court that the petitioner (Chennuboina), who had sought quashing the criminal proceedings against him, was an intern allowed to work in the preparation of a code for LCA to be used during wartime. Chennuboina is alleged to have obtained the entire source code and published the same for sale on the Dark Web.

Justice MNagaprasanna, while dismissing the petition filed by Chennuboina, said, "If on the plea of the petitioner, the present proceedings are quashed against him, it would amount to putting a premium on the activities of the petitioner who has acted in a manner that would compromise the security of the nation...The data that is leaked is of aeronautical technology which is used for Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft, all of which form defence documents of the Ministry of Defence. The investigating officer, after the arrest of the petitioner on April 18, 2022, collected several documents in which the petitioner was involved and leaked the data."

Expansion proposed in two phases: CJI

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

SPEAKING at a function organised by Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) to mark the 77th Independence Day, the CJI said the new building would accommodate 27 additional courts, 51 judges' chambers, four registrar court rooms, 16 registrar chambers as well as other facilities for lawyers and litigants. The proposal is awaiting approval from Department of Justice.

The expansion is proposed in two phases. In the first phase, the museum and the annexe building will be demolished to construct 15 court rooms, judges' chambers, SCBA library, etc. In the second phase, portions of the existing court complex will be demolished to build 12 court rooms, judges' chambers, registrar courts, etc.

Referring to Prime Minister Narendra Modi lauding the SC for beginning to upload judgments in regional languages, the CJI said the aim is to translate all 35,000 judgments of the top court since its inception in all Indian languages. Till now, 9,423 judgments have been translated — 8,977 in Hindi and the rest in various other regional languages, he said.

KOPPAL CASE

Special team to nab gangrape accused

AMIT S UPADHYE @Koppal

THE Koppal police, who are investigating the gangrape of a 46-year-old woman, are planning to set up a special team to nab the accused.

As per the FIR registered by the survivor and her husband on August 8, the accused raped her and assaulted her husband over a pending property dispute among relatives. The police said the accused are absconding. "There has been no response for the notices sent to the accused. We will dedicate a team to nab them. The survivor and her family have named 16 people as accused," said an officer.

The family members, however, claimed that they are being pressured by certain police officials, while the witnesses are being threatened by the accused. The survivor's husband said, "A day after the incident was reported on July 26 we wrote a letter to the Women's Commission and Women and Child Welfare Minister. But there has been no response. After a local police officer tried to deter me, I lodged a complaint against the officer with the SP."

He said the property dispute has been going on for a long time, and the family is facing several hardships. "We are unable to grow crops in our own fields. My relative has refused to supply water to our field. In 2021, we had a fight and I had filed a complaint with the Ganga-vati police against the same accused, but it was of no help," he said.



SAINIK SCHOOL KALIKIRI, ANNAMAYYA DIST (AP)
(Under the aegis of Sainik School Society, MoD, Govt of India)

WALK-IN-INTERVIEWS
Walk-in-interviews are scheduled at Sainik School Kalikiri on **30 Aug 2023** for the following vacancies.

S. No	Post	No. of Vacancies	Qualifications, Age & Consolidate pay	Time of Reporting
(a)	PGT (Computer Science)	01	Please visit School Website https://sskal.ac.in	0845 hrs
(b)	TGT (Social Science)	01		1115 hrs

The appointment will be purely on temporary basis for a very short period. Candidates arriving after the reporting time will not be allowed for the interview. No TADA is admissible for the interview. Candidates should be present along with the original documents as per the essential qualifications mentioned in school website. No correspondence through post will be made in this regard. **The school administration reserves the right to cancel any or all the vacancies due to administrative reasons.** Sd/- PRINCIPAL

POSSESSION NOTICE

Whereas, the authorized officer of **Jana Small Finance Bank Limited** (Formerly known as Janalakshmi Financial Services Limited), under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(2) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 issued demand notices to the borrower(s)/ Co-borrower(s) calling upon the borrowers to repay the amount mentioned against the respective names together with interest thereon at the applicable rates as mentioned in the said notices within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notices, along with future interest as applicable, incidental expenses, costs, charges etc incurred till the date of payment and/or realisation.

Sr. No.	Loan No.	Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ Mortgagor	13(2) Notice Date/ Outstanding Due (in Rs.) as on	Date/ Time & Type of Possession
1	45379630000172	1) Mr. Thirumavalavan Govindaraj, 2) Mrs. Sumithra Manavalan M. W/o. Mr. Thirumavalavan Govindaraj, 3) Mrs. Veni G R Mother of Mr. Thirumavalavan Govindaraj	07-06-2023 Rs.4,70,915.30 as on 07-06-2023	11-08-2023 02:45 P.M. Symbolic Possession
Description of the Property: All that piece and parcel of the Residential Property being Middle Portion of the Immovable Property bearing Municipal No.147, PID No. 90-48-147, situated at A.K.Colony, Devarajeevanahalli, Bangalore, (formerly being Southern Portion of Site No.55, Situated at Harijan Colony, Devarajeevanahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk, Bangalore), Presently under Jurisdiction of Ward No.61 of BBMP. East by: Remaining portion of the same Property Sold to Mr. Muthukrishnan A. West by: Remaining Portion of Same property Retained by the Donor, North by: Remaining portion of Site No. 55 & South By: Road, Measuring East to West:10.5 Feet and North to South: 24 Feet, Total Measuring 252 Sq.ft.				
2	3019853094681	1) M/s. Rich Collection, 2) Mr. Raju, Proprietor of Rich Collection, 3) Mrs. Chandrakala	21-08-2021 Rs.13,24,243.00 as on 16-08-2021	12-08-2023 01:15 PM Symbolic Possession
Description of the Property: All that piece and parcel of the Immovable property bearing Site No.119 measuring East to West 56.6 ft and North to South 30 ft in all together measuring 1698 sq.ft Sheshagipuram, Old Katha No.1/2, New Katha No.186, comes under Chunchanakuppe Village Panchayath, Tavarekere Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk and Bounded as under: West by: Road, North by: Site No.120, South by: Site No.118, East by: Private Property.				
3	3019850007195	1) M/s. Marudhar Gift Centre, Represented by its Proprietor, Mr. Gulab Singh, 2) Mr. Gulab Singh, Proprietor of M/s. Marudhar Gift Centre, 3) Mrs. Phool Kunwar	24-05-2023 Rs.13,24,243.00 as on 22-05-2023	12-08-2023 03:35 P.M. Symbolic Possession
Description of the Property: All that piece and parcel of the immovable Property bearing Site No.12 Formed in assessment No.55 Situated at Narasipura Village, Dasanapura Hobli, Bengaluru North Taluk Bengaluru, measuring East to West 40 Ft. and North to South 30 Ft., totally Measuring 1200 Sq.ft. Bangalore and Bounded on: East by: Site No.17, West by: Road, North by: Site No.13, South by: 20 Ft. Road.				

Whereas, the Borrower/s/ Co-borrowers/ Guarantor/s/ Mortgagors, mentioned herein above have failed to repay the amounts due, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/s mentioned herein above in particular and to the Public in general that the authorized officer of **Jana Small Finance Bank Limited** has taken symbolic possession of the properties/ secured assets described herein above in exercise of powers conferred on him under section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the dates mentioned above. The Borrower/s/ Co-borrower/s/ Guarantor/s/ Mortgagors, mentioned herein above in particular and the Public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the aforesaid properties/ Secured Assets and any dealings with the said properties/ Secured Assets will be subject to the charge of **Jana Small Finance Bank Limited**.

Place: Bangalore Date: 16.08.2023 Sd/- Authorised Officer For. Jana Small Finance Bank Limited

JANA SMALL FINANCE BANK
(A scheduled commercial bank)
Registered Office: The Fairway, Ground & First Floor, Survey No.10/1, 11/2 & 12/2B, Off Domlur, Koramangla Inner Ring Road, Next to EGL Business Park, Challaghatta, Bangalore-560071.

The Grain Merchants' Co-Operative Bank Ltd.,
H.O, No.2, Pampamahakavi Road, Chamarajpet, Bengaluru - 560 018.
Phone: 26677552, 26679041

PUBLIC AUCTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

Auction sale under the securitization and reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforce of Security Interest Act 2002 Section 13(4) of the Immovable properties mortgaged to The Grain Merchants' Co-Operative Bank Ltd., is brought to Sale under "AS IS WHERE IS CONDITION" and "AS IS WHAT IS CONDITION". Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/ charged to the Secured Creditor, **Symbolic possession** of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer.

Name of the Borrower	Description of Property	Balance Outstanding	Auction Date
1 Smt S.Saira W/o A.Srinivasulu Flat No.A-1, Key Stone Manor No.2, Peazold Road, Richards Town, Bengaluru-560 084 Surety: Sri A.Srinivasulu	The Residential Apartment Flat No.A, in the Ground Floor with Super structure building known to be "ANJLI VILLA" having built up area measuring 700 Sq.ft with 142 Sq.ft of undivided share in land along with common area with one scooter parking constructed on property bearing No.17 and 17/1, (old No.7) PID Nos.80-5-17 & 80-5-17/1, situated at Pettigrew Street, Civil Station, Ward No.80, Bangalore. Measuring East To West: 35'6" and North To South: 47'9" measuring in all 1695 Sq.ft and bounded as East by: Property bearing old No.16, Pettigrew Street, West by: Property bearing old No.18, Pettigrew Street, North by: Pettigrew Street & South by: Private Property of Todd Lane. Reserve Price of Property : Rs.22,68,000/- (10% is Rs.2,26,800/-).	Rs.33,27,085/- Upto 11.08.2023	19.09.2023 Tuesday at 10.30 a.m
2 Sri B.R.Vasudevan S/o Late M.Raju Chettiar No.43/1, 9th Cross, R.C.Agrahara Chamarajpet, Bengaluru-560018 Surety: Smt Indiradevi	Item No.1 All that piece and parcel of the Property No.2, (in erstwhile Sy.No.62/2, Gavipuram Village, Kasaba Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk), Khatha No.111, Present BBMP Khatha No.111/2, Devanathachar Street, Dasappa Garden, Chamarajpet, Bangalore-18, measuring East to West: 25'9" and North to South: 65'6" in all totally measuring 1699 Sq.Ft., together with building/s constructed thereon along with easementary rights, appurtenances etc., and the said property is bounded on the East by: Property No.3 belonging to Siddappa, West by: Property No.1 belonging to L.Siddalinga, North by: Property belonging to Kudlimutt & South by: Layout Road. Item No.2 All that piece and parcel of the property No.3, (in erstwhile Sy.No.62/2, Gavipuram Village, Kasaba Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk), Old Khatha No.111/3, Present BBMP Khatha No.111/2, Devanathachar Street, Dasappa Garden, Chamarajpet, Bangalore-18, measuring East to West: 8' and North to South: 66' in all totally measuring 528 Sq.Ft., together with building/s constructed thereon along with easementary rights, appurtenances etc., and the said property is bounded on the East by: Remaining Portion of the same Property, West by: Property No.2 belonging to Govramma and others, North by: Property belonging to Kudlimutt & South by: Layout Road. The old PID No.46-24-111/2, Old Ward No.46, Old Ward Name: Chamarajpet, New PID No. 140-W0169-5, New Ward No.140, New Ward Name: Chamarajpet. The Schedule Property vests within the jurisdiction of Basavanagudi Sub Registration Dist. Reserve Price of Property: Rs.1,15,07,000/- (10% is Rs.11,50,700/-)	Rs.97,51,519/- Upto 11.08.2023	19.09.2023 Tuesday at 11.00 am
3 Sri B.Kantharaju S/o late B.M.Basavarajappa No.MIG, 42, 9th Cross 6th Main Road, Kengeri Satellite Town Bengaluru-560 060 Surety: Smt Usha Kantharaju	All that piece and parcel of property bearing No.1263, in the formed by the BDA, situated at Kengeri Satellite Town Extn., Kengeri Hobli, BBMP Ward No.159, Kengeri Uphanagar, Bangalore, measuring East to West 50 feet & North to South 70 feet, totally 3500 Sq.Ft., and bounded On the East by: Site No.1264, West by: Site No.1262, North by: Site No.1254 & South by: Road. Reserve Price of Property: Rs.3,50,73,000/- (10% is Rs.35,07,300/-).	Rs.40,37,839/- Upto 11.08.2023	19.09.2023 Tuesday at 11.30 am

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- The public auction will be conducted in the premises of The Grain Merchants' Co-Operative Bank Ltd., Head Office No.2, Pampamahakavi Road, Chamarajpet, Bangalore-560018.
- For participation in the auction the intending bidders have to deposit an amount equivalent to 10% of the Reserve price of the property being auctioned by means of Demand Draft/Pay Order drawn in favour of M/s.The Grain Merchant's Co-Operative Bank Ltd., The cautioned deposit shall be forfeited by the bank without any prior notice, if the successful bidder fails to adhere to the terms of sale, time and commits default in any manner.
- The Property "SHALL NOT" be sold below the reserve price
- In case the bidder is not successful the EMD amount shall be refund without interest.
- The successful bidder should deposit 25% of the sale price (inclusive of EMD) within 24 Hours after the auction sale, in Cash or Demand Draft and the balance of the Sale price within 15 days from the date of confirmation of sale. In case of default by the successful bidder, all the amounts deposited till then shall be forfeited without notice and the property shall be put for re-auction.
- The successful bidder shall bear the statutory dues/taxes/charges/property tax/electricity charges/water charges/conveyance charges such as stamp duty, registration fee etc. that is required to be paid in order to get the property conveyed in his favour, as per the applicable laws.
- The authorized officer has absolute right to accept or reject any or all if the tender or/bid/offer and/or adjourn/postpone/ cancel the auction sale without assigning any reason, and also to modify an or all terms and conditions of the sale without prior notice.
- The sale is subject to confirmation by the Bank.
- The property can be inspected by the intending bidder between 10.00 A.M. to 5.00 P.M. at his/her expenses at the address mentioned in the schedule.
- The property is put for sale on "AS IS WHERE IS CONDITION" AND "AS IS WHAT IS CONDITION" the intending bidder shall satisfy himself about the title, ownership, statutory approvals, encumbrances etc. of the property.

Sd/-
Authorized Officer,
The Grain Merchants' Co Operative Bank Ltd., Bengaluru-18

Place: Bangalore
Date: 11.08.2023

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— Ramnath Goenka

AFTER TWIN DEATHS, NEET BACK ON TN'S POLITICAL AGENDA

A political slugfest is underway in Tamil Nadu on NEET after the back-to-back suicides of an MBBS aspirant and his father in Chennai. Having led a vociferous attack against the pre-medical entrance test for a few years, the ruling DMK is clearly at odds with reality. Chief Minister M K Stalin firmly stated in his Independence Day address that only if education is transferred to the State List from the Concurrent List can such “cruel exams” be abolished. He has written to the president to grant assent to the state’s NEET Exemption Bill. Opposition party AIADMK, continuing to oppose NEET while being in alliance with the BJP, has shot a political salvo, saying the DMK failed to fulfill its poll promise to scrap it. State BJP president K Annamalai blamed the DMK for misleading students with false promises and said the ruling party has blood on its hands.

The state government has always maintained that the selection process for NEET favours urban students and those who can afford costly coaching classes and ‘paid’ seats in private colleges. Ideologically, DMK opposes entrance exams since they are inherently against the poor and underprivileged. Having an entrance exam for superspeciality medical courses or premier institutions such as JIPMER or AIIMS is okay. But today, NEET is the only route available for all MBBS aspirants.

In the case of engineering, for instance, Anna University offers seats for meritorious students with high marks in school. When NITs were carved out of Regional Engineering Colleges (RECs), they stopped giving admission based on marks obtained in class 12 and went en bloc to JEE. Since then, the number of students from rural areas taking admission to NITs has declined. These students are no less intelligent—it is just that they do not have the wherewithal to join coaching classes and are left to compete with students from the privileged class.

Another concern is the decline in doctors practising in rural areas. With the highest doctor-population ratio, Tamil Nadu hopes to see more people from districts join the medical field to maintain that parity. The government should improve teaching standards in schools by upgrading their syllabi and infrastructure. Going forward, DMK must focus on building public conscience through political activism. The NEET Exemption Bill—the collective will of the people of Tamil Nadu, as DMK puts it—is unlikely to receive presidential assent anytime soon.

ALARM BELLS AS HIGH FOOD PRICES DRIVE INFLATION

Contrary to expectations, retail inflation for July this year has shot up to a 15-month high of 7.44%, up from 4.87% in June. In recent weeks, economists expressed confidence that runaway inflation had been tamed after it had dipped to 4.7% in April this year and 4.25% in May. The year-on-year jump in the Consumer Price Index (CPI)-based inflation was all the more alarming as it had spiked well above the poll-based forecasts conducted by Reuters (6.4%) and Bloomberg, which had predicted inflation at 6.5%. RBI’s recent guarded confidence that things were under control has also been left in tatters, with inflation shooting far beyond the Reserve Bank’s tolerance level of 6%.

It appears the analysts had not considered the high food inflation that has persisted for some time. According to the National Statistical Office (NSO), the food inflation rate rose sharply to 11.51% in July from 4.49% in the previous month, driven by the high prices of vegetables and tomatoes (37%), pulses (13.3%) and cereals (13%). The continuing high food inflation is a matter of concern as it is not easy to reverse shortages and high prices in a limited timeline, given the erratic monsoon and the low acreage of sowing, especially in the case of pulses. Reports that there is deficient monsoon in most parts of the country is again a matter of concern as it may result in a further short supply of food items.

The recently held Monetary Policy Committee meeting of the RBI had kept the repo rate (the rate of interest at which the RBI lends money to commercial banks) unchanged on the confidence that food inflation was high but on the way down. This was based on what was seen as a successful government intervention to cool down food prices and push up the availability of onions and tomatoes. Therefore, the RBI was not for lowering lending rates out of caution; it was also expected not to increase them over the next two to three quarters. The spike in retail inflation has now torn up some of these assumptions. Given the new scenario, it will be a regime of tight and more expensive credit for some time, slowing growth in the medium term. On the other hand, the government will have to work harder to cool food prices by ensuring higher production and preventing man-made shortages.

QUICK TAKE

DEDICATED HIGHWAY PATROLS

Punjab is India’s first state to have a dedicated Sadak Suraksha Force to control growing fatal highway accidents within its geographical limits. Equipped with modern vehicles, speed radars, body cameras, breathalysers and medical kits, they’ll be stationed along state arterial roads, monitoring traffic in their zones. Three factors cause fatalities—speed, lane driving and overtaking. The force can be effective if it is part of a coordinated highway patrol programme with access to trauma centres and all-weather helicopter, towing and emergency facilities. The force personnel must specialise in either first response, emergency services or debris clearance and traffic management tasks.

Air India is a brand new Air India today. A brand with a new identity that it has put together for itself. In the week gone by, the Tata group and AI Chairman, N Chandrasekaran, and AI CEO Campbell Wilson, unveiled a totally new airline logo and livery. On the outer part of the aircraft is the brand name “AIR INDIA”, painted in a bold new font, with the underbelly also carrying the brand name—for those who might just look up at the aircraft as it flies over.

As I look keenly at this just-unveiled brand identity kit, I am happy for the airline. It has put together a new avatar for the future. An airline that has been in the throes of government ownership for a long time is just about coming out of that shadow, or eclipse (if I am to be rude).

The colour red is being used strongly, as is the different-looking font. The tail fin comprises a riot of colours though, including red, metallic gold and purple. And this is where the brand loses out in terms of recognition and distinction. While “less is more” is the colour ethos of the future, in this case it seems to have been given a miss. Possibly, force-fitting the Air Vistara purple into Air India’s brand image is the reason for this “colour clutter”.

A big part of this rebranding exercise of Air India is its logo, the Vista, which draws inspiration from the airline’s jharoka/window. Expect advertising executions to take full advantage of this small window. A window is after all something you look out of. And when you do, you see a lot. A window is a limitless device for sure, just as Microsoft has discovered and used to its advantage globally in the past. Importantly, a window is something which helps one look inside from the outside as well. Air India needs to prepare itself adequately so its customers can do just that and experience the positive.

Even as this new brand identity kit has been unveiled, social media has seen a frenzy of comments and counter-comments. A lot of people hate the change completely. I don’t blame them really. The key point to understand is a simple one: Air India is an India property. Any brand name with “India” in it will be owned by Indians passionately, never mind whether they use it physically or not.

Air India in more ways than one is an India property. It is a brand that has the pride of being put together by a passionate J R D Tata, the doyen of the Tata group. It has had the India name flying all over the world, with it being even recognised glo-

The key point is a simple one: Air India is an India property. Any brand name with ‘India’ in it will be owned by Indians passionately, never mind whether they use it physically or not

AIR INDIA: A GRAND REVAMP FOR A BRAND NEW BRAND

HARISH BIJOOR

Brand Guru and Founder, Harish Bijoore Consults Inc



SOUMYADIP SINHA

bally as a gold-standard airline in the distant past. An airline of choice when you thought of travel into or out of India. And then came government control.

The airline deteriorated in terms of service. This happened slowly but surely. And this dip in service led to a dip in the image of the brand as well. It had to happen. When the product does not deliver, its image sinks. And now, with the brand under Tata group once again, a lot is expected from it. This brand image rejig is possibly just the beginning of the good

times the airline expects to put together for itself and its users.

The noise and dissonance surrounding this brand identity kit is bound to be there. Air India may not be India’s most favourite airline yet, but its brand assets were. And is. Air India in many ways is owned by the people of India. In their minds. The AI Maharajah, the bold red, the decorative window and literally everything else about the airline have been the personal belongings of the Indian.

When you love the old that much, you

DEMOCRACY IN DANGER: TRUE OR FALSE - PART II

MAKARANDR PARANJPE

Professor of English at JNU

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE

BJP of the sins that they themselves commit flagrantly. Selective or targeted criticism is, therefore, not fair.

More importantly, runs the counter-argument, there is a larger context in which “democratic backsliding” occurs nationally and internationally. And ignoring this context leads to grave errors in judgement and a significant distortion of reality



PTI

In the dynamic dance of democracy, freedom is neither absolute nor static. In fact, it is only one of the many factors that account for a regime’s success or failure

Nationally, authoritarian and anti-democratic tendencies feed off each other, whether at the level of the Centre or state. They mimic and amplify one another, resulting in a vicious cycle of competitive despotism, all in the service of the politics of seeking and retaining power. Power at all costs and with all means—fair if possible, foul if necessary.

Internationally, the erosion of democratic values works similarly across nations and geographies. If autocratic or, as the euphemism goes, “strong” leaders have been re-elected to power in several countries, there must be a reason for this. A reason that also applies to India. These leaders, usually neo-nationalists, are seen by the majority of their population as protecting the fundamental character of their countries during a time of great stress and transition. Moreover, many, if not most, of these strong leaders, also deliver or

are perceived to deliver on governance and development much more efficiently and satisfactorily than their weak and ineffective opponents.

If Modi-supporting classes offer such justifications, what about the masses? Unfortunately, most among the latter care little about “democratic backsliding”. They want the basic necessities of life—roti, kapda, makaan—and bathrooms and gas cylinders too. Better infrastructure, healthcare and national security. Less corruption. Of course, jobs. But on none of these crucial indicators does the opposition have anything better to offer.

In India, democracy means the rule of the majority. If the majority does not mind, and even endorses authoritarian trends, who is to blame? Does democracy, paradoxically prefer to curtail its own freedom in favour of governance-effective authoritarianism?

The outcome of the polls next year will provide more concrete answers. If Modi wins with the kind of numbers that he himself is predicting, why would he change what has worked so well for him till now? But if the numbers do not result in a “brute majority”, there may be some easing of the “bulldozer mentality”.

Those crying over “democratic backsliding” must find a way to translate abstract notions of freedom into electoral costs or outcomes. Else, democracies offer few checks to determined strongmen.

In the dynamic dance of democracy, freedom is neither absolute nor static. In fact, it is only one of the many factors that account for a regime’s success or failure.

Therefore, one cannot fantasise about it or, worse, fanaticise it into a settled dogma like a religious cult. Nor rap leaders we do not like on their knuckles for not conforming to our expectations or ideas of it. Even if we try to prioritise, if not weaponise, freedom, elected martinets do not care. Nor do those who continue to vote them to power.

(Concluded)
(Views are personal)
(Tweets @MakrandParanspe)

MAIL BAG

WRITE TO: letters@newindianexpress.com

Cauvery water

Ref: *TN moves SC for Cauvery water* (Aug 15). TN farmers are worried their crops would be destroyed without enough water for irrigation. Karnataka might not be able to take a tough stand as Congress is in an alliance with DMK in TN. A permanent solution is needed. For this, the states should settle for an amicable sharing of the water.
C V Aravind, Bengaluru

Victimhood politics

Ref: *The problem of one-party democracy, and its solution* (Aug 15). The article revealed the nature of democracy in today’s India. How victimhood politics can be used as a weapon against the one-party democracy is a key point. But even those voices can be nullified under the ‘reform, perform and transform’ rule of the ruling party. The timely actions of political leaders can reduce this destruction.
Anila N V, Palakkad

India’s democracy

Reading the two good columns in the NIE editorial page, one wonders if we are becoming too hyperbolic on the issue of democracy. If the opposition feels democracy is mishandled, why have they discouraged discussions in Parliament? During the Emergency, democracy was totally destroyed. In the last nine years, this hasn’t happened. Let India rise to the occasion and see democracy in perspective.
Jitendranath Guru, Padampur

Andhra education

Apropos of *Submit report on introducing AI in higher edu: Jagan* (Aug 15). The Andhra CM has embarked on a very ambitious project of making the state’s education system reach international standards through the introduction of IB, AI, etc. It’s all very good, but the quality of teachers is a big question mark. Unless this issue is tackled simultaneously, all efforts will be fruitless.
K Nehru Patnaik, Visakhapatnam

Road accidents

Ref: *Six hurt, four vehicles damaged in separate cases of speeding* (Aug 15). Frequent accidents due to speeding is sad and reflects the lack of respect towards pedestrians. Authorities must seize illegal vehicles, impose severe fines, etc. There should be basic education in schools on pedestrian safety.
S Lakshminarayan, Hyderabad

NEET politicised

Ref: *19-year-old fails to clear NEET twice, ends life* (Aug 14). Instead of finding solutions to rectify the problems in NEET, parties make it political to get votes. NEET can’t be abolished. The government should find solutions to prepare students and alter the NEET system.
Prathibha K, Chennai



Dhamendra Pradhan @dpradhanbjp
To give new strength to the Vishwakarma of the nation, Vishwakarma Yojana will be launched on the upcoming Vishwakarma Jayanti.



Rahul Gandhi @RahulGandhi
My mother India is not just a piece of land, not even a bunch of ideas, but the voice of every Indian.



Sitaram Yechury @SitaramYechury
As Modi boasts at Red Fort, a reality check: GDP per capita, India ranks 24 out of 26 countries; Human Development Index, 26 of 29 countries; Infant mortality, 7th worst of 32 countries.

India enjoys respect of the world, says Putin

World leaders extend Independence Day greetings, promise to keep stronger relations, shared values in all spheres

YESHI SELI @New Delhi

GREETINGS poured in from around the world for India, which is celebrating its 77th Independence Day.

"India has achieved universally acknowledged success in economic, scientific, technical and social fields. India enjoys well-earned respect on the world arena and plays a constructive role in international affairs. We attach great importance to our special and privileged strategic partnership. I am confident that with joint efforts, we will further enhance fruitful bilateral cooperation in all areas and constructive partnership in solving topical issues of regional and global agenda," said Russian President Vladimir Putin.

French President Emmanuel Macron, in his message, said that India and France were trusted partners. "Congratulations Indian people on Independence Day. A month ago, in Paris, my friend Modi



VLADIMIR PUTIN
PRESIDENT, RUSSIA
We attach great importance to our special and privileged strategic partnership. With joint efforts, we will enhance fruitful bilateral cooperation



EMMANUEL MACRON
PRESIDENT, FRANCE
A month ago in Paris, my friend Modi and I set new Indo-French ambitions all the way to 2047. India can count on France as a trusted partner always



BENJAMIN NETANYAHU
PRIME MINISTER, ISRAEL
Dear PM Narendra Modi and people of India, I extend heartfelt congratulations on your I-Day. May our nations continue to grow closer and prosper together



JUSTIN TRUDEAU
PRIME MINISTER, CANADA
As the world's largest democracy, India will continue to be a key partner for Canada in the promotion of our shared values of democracy, pluralism

and I set new Indo-French ambitions all the way to 2047—the centenary year of India's Independence. India can count on France as a trusted partner always," said Macron.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau sent a long message congratulating India and also seeking to collaborate. "As the world's largest democracy, India is and will continue

to be a key partner for Canada in the promotion of our shared values of democracy, pluralism and progress. We are committed to building on this rich history of collaboration, including under India's presidency of the G20 this year. As Canada continues to strengthen its presence in the region under its Indo-Pacific strategy, we will continue to work to-

gether to preserve the rule-based international order, promote multilateralism, and grow our economic ties to benefit people in both our countries as well as the region at large," said Trudeau.

The Prime Minister and Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia too send congratulatory message to President Droupadi Murmu. "We wish Indian Pres-

ident good health and happiness, and the government and people steady peace and prosperity," said Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud.

Israel's President Benjamin Netanyahu congratulated Modi and the people of India. "May our nations continue to grow closer and prosper together," he said.

Interestingly, the Chinese Embassy in Delhi too sent a congratulatory message. "China and India helped each other in the struggle for national liberation and independence. May the two largest developing nations join hands to promote common development and prosperity in the days ahead," the message read.

British Foreign Secretary James Cleverly said India and UK were united by its people.

Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Maldives, South Korea were amongst many other nations that sent wishes on India's Independence day.

I-DAY PLUS

PM DONS MULTICOLOUR BANDHANI PRINT TURBAN

Prime Minister Narendra Modi sported a multicolour Rajasthani bandhani print turban with an off-white kurta and churidar for the 77th Independence Day celebrations at Red Fort. For his 10th Independence Day speech as PM, Modi also wore a black V-neck jacket with the turban, which was a mix of yellow, green and red colour with a long tail. It was in keeping with the tradition of Modi wearing colourful



turbans on every Independence Day since 2014. Last year, he chose a saffron headgear with red patterns and a long tail, which he paired with a traditional kurta and churidar, complemented by a blue jacket and a stole. In 2021, Modi sported a saffron and cream headgear with a long tail. He had paired the 'safa' with a half-sleeve kurta and churidar, and wore a white scarf with saffron border to cover his mouth and nose in view of the COVID-19 pandemic. In his maiden Independence Day in 2014, he had opted for a bright red Jodhpuri bandhej turban. In 2015, he went for a yellow turban covered with multi-coloured criss-cross lines.

FLOWER POWER, CANNONS DAZZLE

To the surprise of the audience watching the Independence Day events at the Red Fort, flowers, including roses, were showered up on them from the sky. "It made us feel elated and special the first time when IAF helicopters welcomed us with flowers," remarked Sanjay Kumar, a youth present at the event. Also, for the first time, a salute was given during the 56 seconds of the national anthem with 21 indigenous cannons of 105 calibre. All these cannons belong to the 105 mm field gun category, and can rotate 360 degrees and fire shells continuously in a battle field. This is a long range weapon that covers a range of 17 km.

GUJARAT TRIBALS MADE HAND FANS FOR EVENT

The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) had supplied hand fans made by tribal artisans of Gujarat, for the dignitaries attending the flag hoisting at Red Fort. The hand-made fans were made by artisans of Padhar tribe, a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group, from Surendranagar district. The fans were made from colorful fabric and decorated with mirrors and sequins typical of the state. Last year, hand-painted fans by Mahali tribes of West Bengal were used.



POEMS TO HIGHLIGHT PROGRESS IN LAST 9 YRS

PM Modi, in his speech, quoted many poetic lines. Glorifying India's progress of last nine years, he said, "Yeh Bharat na rukta hai, yeh Bharat na thakta hai, yeh Bharat na haanfta hai, aur na hi yeh Bharat haarta hai" (This is the new India. This India doesn't stop. This India doesn't tire. This India doesn't falter and this India doesn't lose). Before concluding his speech, he went for another set of lines: "Chalta chalta kaalchakra, Amritkaal ka bhaalchakra, Sabke sapne, apne sapne, Panpe sapne saare, dheer chale, veer chale, chale yuva humaare, Neeti sahi reeti nai, gati sahi raah nai, Chuno chunauti seena taan, jag mein badhao desh ka naam" (As the wheel of time keeps turning, the ever revolving cycle of the Amrit Kaal, Everyone's dreams are my own dreams, Nurturing all the dreams, moving steadily, bravely marching, our youth in stride, With the right principles, forging a new way, setting the right pace, a new path, Embrace challenges with steadfast courage, elevate the name of the nation in the world).

Centre to increase no. of Jan Aushadhi Kendras from 10K to 25K: Modi

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @New Delhi

THE Centre is working to increase the number of Jan Aushadhi Kendras (subsidised medicine shops) from 10,000 to 25,000, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Tuesday.

Addressing the nation on the 77th Independence Day from the ramparts of the Red Fort, the PM said these Kendras — where quality generic medicines are available at affordable prices to citizens through dedicated outlets — have given new power to the people, especially the middle class.

"Jan Aushadhi Kendras have given new strength to the middle class of the country through savings of ₹20,000 crore," he said in his address.

"The target is to increase the number of Jan Aushadhi Kendras to 25,000," he added.

There were 9,303 such centres across India till March 31, according to its official website. The Union health ministry plans to raise the numbers of such kendras to 10,000 by the end of the year. These outlets offer 1,800 drugs and 285 surgical items.

"If someone is diagnosed with diabetes, then a monthly bill of ₹3,000 gets accrued. Through Jan Aushadhi Kendras, the medicines that cost ₹100, we are giving it at ₹10-15," PM Modi said.

In his speech, Modi also said that the Centre has so far spent ₹70,000 crore on its national public health insurance scheme, Ayushman Bharat.

SUBSIDISED MEDICINES

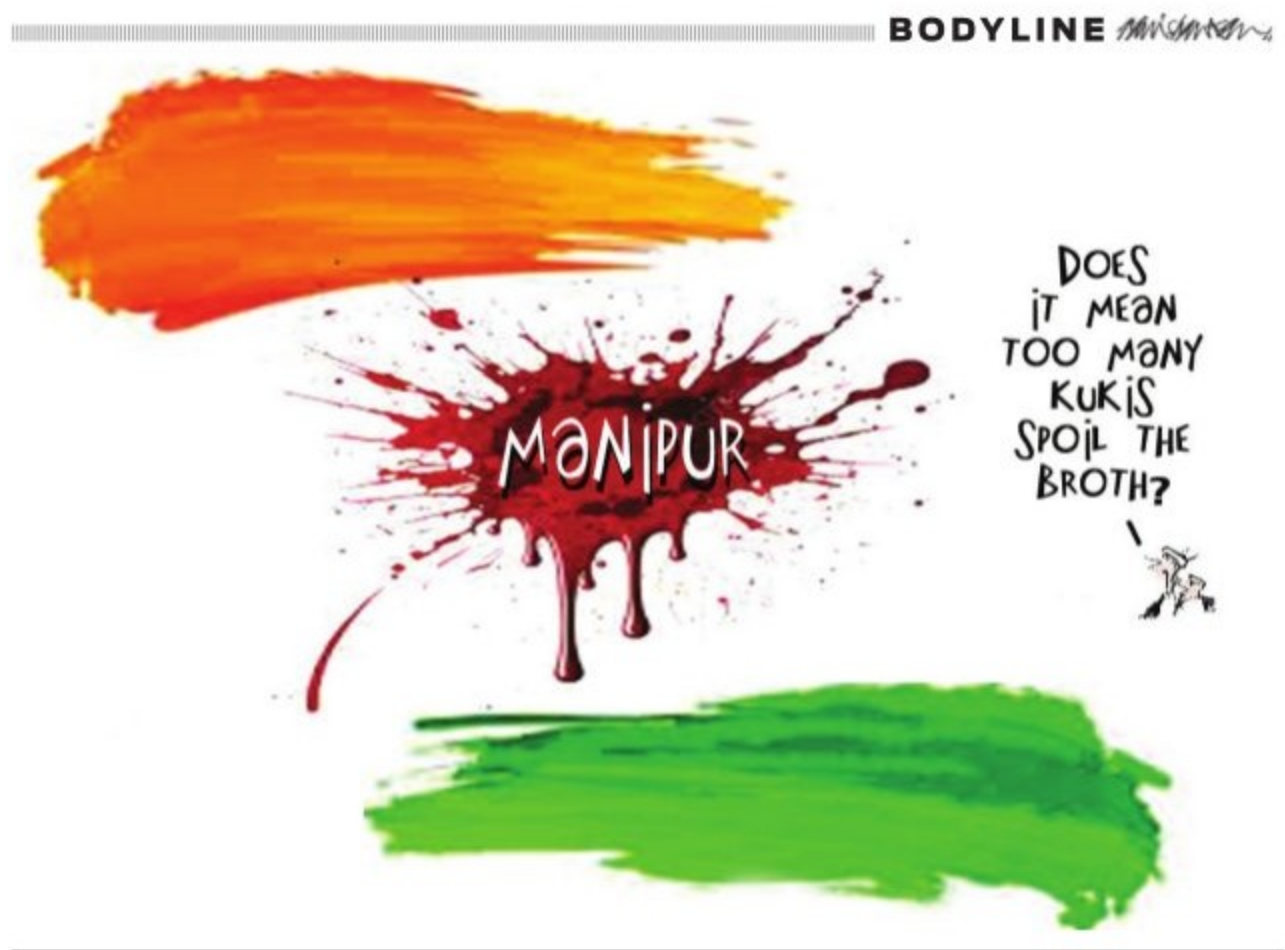


Launched in September 2018, the scheme has two components. The first one is the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, which provides cashless hospitalisation services of up to ₹5 lakh to nearly 12.5 crore families, and the second one is health and wellness centres under which primary health centres are upgraded to provide holistic primary care to rural and urban population.

The Prime Minister also lauded the nurses, doctors and other medical professionals for their efforts for changing the fortunes of the country.

He said that Covid has taught us that the world's development is not possible without a human centric approach.

He also appreciated the exemplary contribution of health workers, especially Anganwadi workers and ASHA workers, for their dedication and persistent efforts in achieving the milestone of over 200 crore Covid vaccinations.



Swadesh Darshan: Ministry lacked vision, says CAG

PARVEZ SULTAN @New Delhi

THE Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), the country's top auditing body, has revealed that the much-talked about Swadesh Darshan Scheme (SDS) was brought in by the Ministry of Tourism without an effective mechanism for evaluation or approval of projects sent by the state government or Union Territories (UTs) within a "definite time frame".

The audit has found that the ministry had taken 1-6 years to review and return the proposals of 202 projects.

The report states that a total of 71 project proposals pertaining to 2015-2019 were returned by the ministry in August-October 2019 with the request to submit the proposal in line with the scheme guidelines of October 2017.

"Further, 131 project proposals were returned (in November 2021) on the ground that the scheme was under review. From the 10 available details of 96 project proposals out of 202, it was noticed that the ministry took up to six years to review and return the

Flagship scheme for tourism development

The Swadesh Darshan Scheme, launched in 2015 with an outlay of ₹500 crore, is a Central sector flagship scheme for the development of tourism infrastructure in the country. A total of 76 projects comprising 910 sites and 6,898 components in 243 districts were sanctioned under it during 2015-2019. According to the tourism ministry, 63 projects are complete. The scheme has been revamped as 'Swadesh Darshan 2.0' with the objective of developing sustainable and responsible tourism destinations. The ministry has identified 55 destinations for development for which it has already started appointing consultants.

proposals of states," reads the CAG audit document submitted during the recently concluded Parliament session.

The ministry kept 43 propos-

als pending for three years or more without taking any action, and nine of these proposals were returned after 5-6 years of submission," it noted.

The federal auditor selected 14 projects related to 10 tourist circuits from 13 states out of 76 projects (15 circuits) approved under the scheme for review.

The ministry did not have any long-term vision or policy for implementing the scheme, the CAG also noted. "While 18-36 months had been given to the state governments/UTs to complete the projects, the ministry itself kept the project proposals pending for up to six years in few cases without any action as it did not have a defined timeline for approval or rejection of project proposals," the CAG remarked.

India, China hold 2-day 'elaborate' military-level talks; no major outcome



Will keep momentum of talks, says MEA

It is for the first time that the military talks between India and China spanned two days. "They agreed to resolve the remaining issues in an expeditious manner and maintain the momentum of dialogue and negotiations through military and diplomatic channels," the Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement.

MAYANK SINGH @New Delhi

THE 19th round of the disengagement talks between the corps commanders of India and China stretched for two days with both sides having an "elaborate" discussion on the remaining standoff points.

A joint statement said, "The two sides had a positive, constructive and in-depth discussion on the resolution of the remaining issues along the LAC in the western sector," it said. Sources told this newspaper that the talks were elaborate but there has been no significant outcome.

The two sides, "in line with the guidance provided by the leadership, exchanged views in an open and forward-looking manner," the statement said.

The 19th round of the meeting was held at the Chushul-Moldo border meeting point on the Indian side on August 13-14, it said. India and China agreed to resolve the remaining issues along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh in an expeditious manner, the statement further said.

Depsang and Demchok are the two remaining standoff points. In Depsang, Chinese troops have blocked Indian access to PP 10, 11, 11A, 12, and 13. As per sources, the total area here that remains out of access for Indian troops is about 952 sq km.

Bindeshwar Pathak who revolutionised sanitation practices passes away at 80

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @New Delhi

BINDESHWAR Pathak, the social activist who revolutionised sanitation practices and was instrumental in providing access to clean and dignified restrooms for millions across the country through his pioneering Sulabh toilets, passed away on Tuesday.

Pathak, the 80-year-old founder of Sulabh International, died due to cardiac arrest at Delhi's AIIMS. According to a close aide, he had hoisted the national flag at the Sulabh International headquarters in the morning on Independence Day, but collapsed soon after.

"Founder Sulabh Sanitation, Social Reform and Human Rights Movement, Dr Bindeshwar Pathak is no more. He died of cardiac arrest at All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi," the Sulabh International Social Service Organisation said in a post on X, formerly Twitter.

"He was rushed to the hospital after he complained of uneasiness in the midst of Independence Day celebrations at the campus of Sulabh, Palam-



BINDESHWAR PATHAK
2 APR 1943 - 15 AUG 2023

Dabri Road, New Delhi," the post said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi too took to X to condole his death. "The passing away of Dr Bindeshwar Pathak Ji is a profound loss for our nation. He was a visionary who worked extensively for societal progress and empowering the downtrodden.

"Bindeshwar Ji made it his mission to build a cleaner India. He provided monumental support to the Swachh Bharat Mission. During our various conversations, his passion to-

wards Swachhata was always visible," Modi posted.

"His work will continue to inspire several people. My deepest condolences to his family and loved ones during this difficult time. Om Shanti," the Prime Minister said.

Pathak founded Sulabh International in 1970 with a vision to eradicate open defecation and unclean public toilets. The organisation's pioneering efforts led to creation of the revolutionary Sulabh toilet, a low-cost, eco-friendly solution that has revolutionised sanitation practices across the nation.

Pathak's vision extended beyond technology, encompassing a broader mission to eradicate the stigma associated with manual scavenging and uplifting the lives of those who had long been relegated to the fringes of society.

Through his determined advocacy and innovative initiatives, he successfully raised awareness about the importance of proper sanitation and hygiene, contributing immensely to disease prevention and improved public health.

FRESH FIR

Nuh violence accused Bittu Bajrang held

HARPREET BAJWA @Chandigarh

THE Haryana police on Tuesday arrested cow vigilante Raj Kumar alias Bittu Bajrang, from Faridabad in connection with the Nuh communal clashes. He and his associates allegedly wielded weapons during the VHP-led Jalabhishek yatra, which came under attack in Nuh on July 31.

Sources said Kumar was arrested after a fresh FIR was lodged against him on a complaint by Assistant Superintendent of Police Usha Kundu.

The charges against him include criminal intimidation, carrying illegal weapons, rioting and obstructing public servants from discharging duty, among

others. In her complaint, Kundu stated: "We saw a mob of around 20 people carrying swords and trishuls marching towards Nalhar temple. I was on law and order duty and stopped them. I ordered the police personnel

to seize their weapons and they started raising slogans against police. They manhandled the police personnel. As the police tried to leave with their weapons... they opened the rear gates of the police vehicle and fled with the weapons."

Earlier, a case was registered against the cow vigilante at Faridabad for alleged hate speech. In that case, he was arrested and released on bail.



UNITED COLOURS OF INDIA



INDEPENDENCE Day was as colourful as ever across the country. From the strife-torn areas of Nuh and Imphal to rough terrain like Leh and country's financial capital Mumbai, people thronged the streets to celebrate freedom. People from all walks of life participated in various celebrations planned for the day. After two decades, Srinagar's Bakshi Stadium was full to its capacity with the authorities doing away with restrictions on the movement of people this year. However, it was a subdued affair in rain-battered hill states of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand. The parade in Shimla was not attended by police & disaster response force personnel.



TRICOLOUR EVERYWHERE: (Clockwise from top left) Students of a madrasa at Ghasera in Haryana's Nuh; Artists at an event in Imphal; Anjuman-E-Islam School and College take selfie in Mumbai; Himveers of the 15th Battalion ITBP in Leh | PTI

2 cops gunned down in J'khand Maoists ambush

MUKESH RANJAN @ Ranchi

TWO police personnel, including a sub-inspector of Jharkhand Jaguar, were killed in an encounter with CPI (Maoists) in Kolhan jungles of West Singhbhum. The incident took place between the jungles of Tumbahaka and Sarjomburu villages under Tonto police station on Monday.

According to an official communiqué from the police headquarters in Ranchi, the incident took place while an anti-Maoist operation was being conducted by a joint team of CRPR and Jharkhand Jaguar in West Singhbhum.

"Sub-inspector Amit Tiwari and constable Gautam Kumar were martyred in an encounter with the Maoists in Kolhan jungles under Tonto police station in West Singhbhum," said an official statement from police. The anti-Maoist operations to flush them out from the region still continue, it said.

Sub-inspector Tiwari was from Palamu and was to return home after the operation to celebrate his son's birthday. Constable Gautam Kumar got into the job on compensatory grounds after the death of his father.

U'khand breaks 72-year rain record, IMD warns of more showers in Aug

NARENDRA SETHI @ Dehradun

UTTARAKHAND has broken a 72-year-old record of heavy rains. On August 22, 1951, the rain with slightly less intensity was reported from Sahasradhara, around 15 km from Dehradun. The meteorological department believes that the current rain outbreak is not expected to bring much relief. Sources in the meteorological department said Dehradun district has got the maximum rain across the state in the last 24 hours with 254 mm rainfall. The rains, which began on Sunday, continued till Monday morning, breaching the August rainfall mark in 72 years.

Sources in the state meteorological department said, "In the last 24 hours, as per data, Dehradun district received a total of 175.1 mm rainfall, which is about one-thousand per cent more than normal. Tehri district received 82.5 mm rainfall, while Uttarakhand received the lowest rainfall of 20.4 mm. At the same time, 52.9 mm of rainfall was recorded, which is 273 per cent more, across the state."

"Apart from intermittent rains in the hills of Uttarakhand, there has been a heavy rainfall, very intense and extremely heavy rainfall, which contributes to cloudburst incidents," said a Met official.

The meteorological department has issued an alert and predicted heavy rains on August 18 and 19. "A statewide orange and yellow alert has been issued for torrential rains in Uttarakhand till August 18," said state meteorological department director Bikram Singh.

"An orange alert has been issued in Dehradun, Pauri and Tehri, while yellow alert has been issued for Haridwar, Nainital, Champawat and Udham Singh Nagar districts," said Singh.

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"An orange alert has been issued in Dehradun, Pauri and Tehri, while yellow alert has been issued for Haridwar, Nainital, Champawat and Udham Singh Nagar districts," said Singh.

Heritage Shimla-Kalka railway line damaged as rain toll 54

HARPREET BAJWA @ Chandigarh

FOUR more bodies were recovered from the landslide site at a Shiv temple at Summerhill in Shimla and another person died in a fresh landslide on Tuesday in the state capital, taking the death toll to at least 54 in the rain havoc in Himachal Pradesh in two days.

The UNESCO world heritage Shimla-Kalka railway line was damaged near Summer Hill after a landslide swept away a 50-metre bridge, leaving a portion of the track hanging.

The Pong dam authorities had to release more water in a controlled manner on Monday evening. However, the released water stranded villagers in the low-lying areas along the Beas. The authorities by Tuesday evening rescued 766 people in Fatehpur and the Indora subdivision of Kangra district.

A massive landslide razed a Shiv temple on Monday morning, trapping several devotees inside. A dozen bodies have been recovered from the site, pushing the toll to 54.

A National Disaster Response Force team on Tuesday joined the rescue and search operation on Tuesday.

Local residents said at least



Rescue workers search for people feared missing in landslides in Shimla on Tuesday

nine people whom they knew were missing.

"There could be more people, not known to the local residents, lying under the debris or being swept away by the swollen Beas," said a resident.

In another landslide in Shimla on Tuesday, at least five houses collapsed in the Krishna Nagar area. Sources said the houses were vacated earlier today as cracks had started to appear on the walls.

As a part of the hilllock came crashing down, at least five houses collapsed upon a slaughterhouse where some people were reportedly working.

Shimla superintendent of police Sanjeev Gandhi said the body of a person has been recovered from the debris. "Rescue operations are continuing. There are chances of more people being trapped," said the police officer.

Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu said the toll might go up as the rescue work gains momentum. Kangra deputy commissioner Nipun Jindal has reportedly written to the Indian Air Force seeking help to rescue the stranded. Two IAF choppers were sent in, which saved 213 people in multiple sorties.

I-Day gift: Fillip to steel plant in Maoist-hit Bastar

EJAZ KAISER @ Raipur

OPERATIONS of the blast furnace at the steel plant operated by public sector enterprise National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) in Nagarnar, Chhattisgarh, commenced on Saturday, marking a crucial step towards the plant's operational readiness.

The 4,506 cubic metre blast furnace is designed to produce 9,500 tonnes of hot metal (molten metal) per day.

HR coils, sheets, plates and hot metal will be produced by the steel plant that will operate on a zero-discharge concept. The facility houses one of the most energy-efficient and environment-friendly technologies to produce steel, officiating chairman and managing director Amitava Mukherjee said.

Stating that commissioning of the 'Maa Danteshwari' blast furnace marks a crucial step towards the steel plant's operational readiness, NMDC said the operations commenced af-



Nagarnar Steel Plant in Bastar | EXPRESS

ter initial loading of 1,700 tonne coke, 985 tonne sinter, 270 tonne iron ore and 245 tonne fluxes.

The iron and steel plant, being built by NMDC, is a 3 million tonne per annum capacity integrated steel plant on 1,800 acres at a sanctioned cost of ₹23,840 crore. NMDC Iron and Steel Plant was demerged from

NMDC to NSL in October, 2022.

The first and only steel plant in Bastar, one of the aspirational districts, is expected to commence its production shortly. Several major units are being commissioned sequentially to ensure their interdependence can be established steadily in Nagarnar steel plant, NMDC

officials said.

Experts who understand the political economy of the backward region in south Chhattisgarh stated the commissioning of the greenfield integrated steel plant in Bastar will usher in a major development and bring in positive changes in the tribal-dominated area.

The blast furnace at Nagarnar has been designed and built by TATA Projects Limited along with the technology supplier Danieli Corus BV from Netherlands with state-of-the-art facilities.

NMDC claimed that the products of Nagarnar plant will meet the country's growing demands of products in high grade steel and will contribute significantly towards India becoming self-reliant in the steel sector. There will also be an in-house generation of 80 MW power plant using waste gas and waste heat. The Nagarnar Steel Plant is a modern 3 MTPA capacity with a compact layout utilising only 1,800 acres of land.

BHAGAT BRIDGE

Army's gift to the last village on the LoC

MAYANK SINGH @ New Delhi

THE residents of Danna, the last village on the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu & Kashmir's Machhal Sector, couldn't have asked for a better gift on Independence Day. The Indian Army linked this quaint village, which sits across the Machhal Nala, with a 115-foot-long bridge.

On Tuesday, the Army dedicated the bridge to the villagers as Independent Day gift. The bridge was officially inaugurated by Sepoy Mian Gul Khan, a 90-year-old veteran of the 1971 war and a resident of the area. The ceremony took place in the presence of senior army officials and local dignitaries, as well as residents from seven nearby villages.

The 115-foot-long bridge has been named 'Bhagat Bridge' in

memory of Late Major Bhagat Singh, Veer Chakra, who sacrificed his life defending this sector during the 1965 war. Danna village is also popularly known as Bhagat Village.

Highlighting the significance of the bridge, an officer said it would breathe a new life into the village. He said the villagers had no place to seek refuge during firing across the LoC, as bunkers could not be constructed there due to the lack of connectivity.

"The bridge will alleviate the challenges faced by locals due to lack of connectivity across Machhal Nala. It will provide them with a means of sending their children to school and facilitating the transportation of the sick and elderly. Additionally, the bridge will attract tourists to visit this pristine area," the officer added.

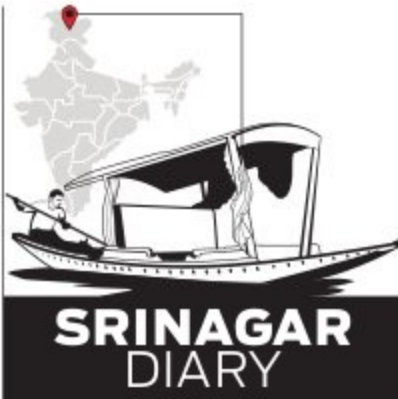
New lotus variety with 108 petals launched

NAMITA BAJPAI @ Lucknow

THE CSIR-National Botanical Research Institute launched an improvised variety of the Lotus with 108 petals and named it 'Namoh 108' to dedicate to the nation on the 77th Independence Day.

The new variety is more weather resilient and can flower for 10 months, from March to December, after NBRI's technology intervention. The CSIR-NBRI also released apparels made from lotus fibre and a perfume developed from Lotus plants. 'Namoh 108' was launched by CSIR director general N Kalaiselvi at NBRI's week-long festival 'One Week One Lab Programme' started on Monday.

"Considering the religious importance of lotus and the number '108', this combination gives an important identity to this variety," said the CSIR DG.



SRINAGAR DIARY

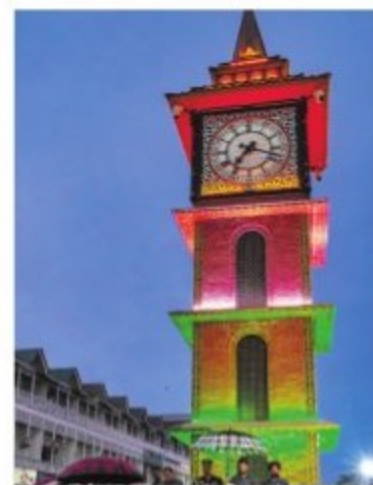
FAYAZ WANI

Our correspondent in Jammu and Kashmir

fayazwani123@gmail.com

MiG-29 fighter jets deployed at Srinagar

In order to tackle Pakistani and Chinese threats, India has deployed a squadron of upgraded MiG-29 fighter jets at the important Srinagar air base in Jammu and Kashmir. The Trident's squadron, which is known as the 'Defender of the North', has replaced the MiG-21 squadron with the upgraded MiG-29s at the Srinagar air base. The Srinagar air base has been responsible for taking care of the threat perception from Pakistan. After the surgical strike on Jaish training camp in Balakote in February 2019, the airbase was put on high alert. The MiG-29s, would be first to respond to any airspace violation attempts by Pakistan.



Iconic Clock Tower gets major facelift

The historic and iconic Clock Tower (Ghanta Ghar) in city centre Lal Chowk witnessed a major makeover under the Srinagar Smart City Project. The refurbished Clock Tower, which is named after Moscow's iconic Red Square, will add to the city's charm and attract tourists to the city centre. It is a hub of commercial activity. The revamped Clock Tower was inaugurated by Lt Governor Manoj Sinha a day before Independence Day. It was illuminated in the colours of the national flag. The idea behind the tower is to turn Lal Chowk into a tourist hub like the Dal Lake.

Srinagar conference centre's name modified

Four years after abrogation of Article 370, the Lt Governor administration, hinting at the name change has formally dropped the title 'Sher' (lion), a reference to late National Conference (NC) founder and former J&K Prime Minister Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah, from the name of Sherikashmir International Conference Centre (SKICC) located on the banks of the Dal Lake in Srinagar. In an official statement on August 13 when Lt Governor Manoj Sinha flagged off Tiranga Yatra in Srinagar, the name of SKICC was thrice called KICC. It indicates change in the name of international conference centre, where government functions are held

Kremlin unleashes missile barrage on Ukraine

Russia fired a total of 28 cruise missiles, says Ukrainian air force

KYIV

RUSSIAN forces unleashed a barrage of missiles on regions across Ukraine early on Tuesday, killing civilians and damaging infrastructure.

The Ukrainian air force said Russia fired a total of 28 cruise missiles at the country. Sixteen were intercepted, it said in a statement.

"Deliberate large-scale attacks on civilians. Solely for the sake of killing and psychological pressure," presidential adviser Mykhailo Podolyak said. Podolyak added that the barrage was "an undeniable manifestation" of Russia's "terrorist activity, legally documented by numerous destructions and victims."

Six out of seven of the Russian-launched missiles hit the western region of Lviv, wounding 19 people, including a 10-year-old child, Lviv Gov. Maksym Kozivskyi reported. Forty buildings and houses were damaged in the region that borders Poland, including in the city of Lviv, and the power grid was also damaged.



Ukrainian soldiers ride all-terrain vehicles at the front line near Bakhmut, one of the longest battles with Russian troops, Ukraine on Monday | AP

In Volyn, three persons were killed by a Russian missile strike and three others were injured, as per Oleksii Kuleba, deputy head of Ukraine's presidential office. In the western Ivano-Frankivsk region, missile debris hit a private house. In the southeastern Dnipropetrovsk region, two people were injured.

Meanwhile, Russia said on Tuesday that its forces had struck military-purpose industrial facilities in several sites across Ukraine.

"Ukraine's military-industrial complex suffered significant damage," the defence ministry said in a statement, adding that it had carried out long-range precision strikes on "key" facilities.

The barrage came just hours before top Russian military officials and their counterparts from Asia, the Middle East and Africa gathered outside Moscow for a security conference, where the fighting in Ukraine is expected to dominate the agenda. Agencies

UK arrests five persons for allegedly spying for Russia

LONDON

FIVE persons were arrested in the UK on suspicion of breaching the Official Secrets Act, police said in a statement on Tuesday, with reports they were detained for allegedly spying for Russia.

London's Metropolitan Police said four persons—two men aged 31 and 42, and two women aged 29 and 32—were detained in the British capital on February 8 this year.

The fifth—a 45-year-old man—was held at an address on the Norfolk coast in eastern England.

None of the five was charged under the Official Secrets Act, but three of them—Orlin Roussev, 45, from Great Yarmouth in Norfolk; Biser Dzambazov, 42, from Harrow, northwest London; and Katrin Ivonova, 32, also of Harrow—were charged with identity

fraud. Police confirmed to AFP the three charged were Bulgarian nationals.

"All five individuals were later released on police bail and are due to return in September 2023."

The three charged appeared in court in central London on February 13 each charged with "possession of false identity documents with improper intention," a police statement read.

The trio made another court appearance on July 31, and were remanded in custody until a date to be fixed, it added.

The BBC said the initial arrests were made because of suspicion of links to the Russian security services.

But there was no immediate confirmation of the report.

The Met is Britain's biggest police force and has national responsibility for matters involving espionage. AFP

BLAST AT A GAS STATION IN RUSSIA KILLS 35

A massive explosion at a gas station in Russia's southern republic of Dagestan killed 35 people and injured scores more, Russian officials said

115 injured

Russia's Health Ministry said 115 people were injured in the blast and subsequent fire, and 35 of them died, including three children

A total of 65 of those injured, including 16 children, remained hospitalised as of midday Tuesday, the ministry said

Eleven people, including two children, were in grave condition

The explosion occurred Monday night on the outskirts of Makhachkala, the region's capital. A fire started at a car repair shop and spread to a nearby gas station, triggering the blast



PROBE ON

The authorities have begun a criminal investigation. Tuesday has been declared a day of mourning in Dagestan

The explosion in Dagestan was the deadliest in Russia since April 2022, when a fire at a defence research facility in Tver, a city 160 kilometres north of Moscow, killed 22 people and injured a dozen more

A blast at a factory north of Moscow that makes optical equipment for Russia's security forces killed one person and injured 84 more earlier this month

COMPENSATION FOR AFFECTED FAMILIES

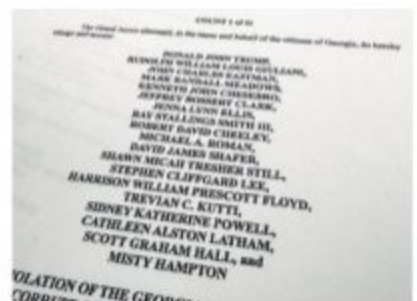
Families of the dead will receive 1 million rubles (about \$10,000) each and the injured between 200,000 and 400,000 rubles (about \$2,000-\$4,000), Dagestan's authorities said

Russian state media said some of those injured would be airlifted to Moscow for treatment. Makhachkala is about 1,600 kilometres south of Moscow

Trump and 18 allies charged in Georgia election meddling

ATLANTA

DONALD Trump and 18 allies were indicted in Georgia on Monday over their efforts to overturn his 2020 election loss in the state, with prosecutors accusing the former president, lawyers and other aides of a "criminal enterprise" to keep him in power.



The indictment against Donald Trump

The nearly 100-page indictment details dozens of acts by Trump or his allies to undo his defeat, including beseeching Georgia's Republican secretary of state to find enough votes for him to win; harassing an election worker who faced false claims of fraud; and attempting to persuade Georgia lawmakers to ignore the will of voters and appoint a new slate of electoral college electors favorable to Trump.

The indictment also outlines a plot involving one of his lawyers to access voting machines in a rural Georgia county and steal data from a voting machine company.

"The indictment alleges that rather than abide by Georgia's legal process for election challenges, the defendants engaged in a criminal racketeering enterprise to overturn Georgia's presidential election result," Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis said.

Other defendants include former White House chief of staff Mark Meadows; Trump attorney and former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani; and a Trump administration Justice Department official, Jeffrey Clark, who advanced the then-president's efforts to undo his election loss in Georgia. Other lawyers who supported legally dubious ideas aimed at overturning the results, including John Eastman, Sidney Powell and Kenneth Chesebro, were also charged.

Willis said defendants would be permitted to voluntarily surrender by noon August 25. She also said she plans to seek a trial date within six months and that she intends to try the defendants collectively. AP



China fudge as it suspends data update on surging youth unemployment

BEIJING

CHINA skipped giving an update on a politically sensitive spike in unemployment among young people as official data on Tuesday showed an economic slump deepened in July.

Meanwhile, the central bank unexpectedly cut a key interest rate in a sign of growing official urgency about shoring up economic growth that fell sharply in the three months ending in June.

Youth unemployment is sensitive after a survey in June found a record 21.3% of potential urban workers aged 16 to 24 couldn't find work after an economic rebound following the end of anti-virus controls fizzled out.

Publication of unemployment by age group is suspended while the National Bureau of Statistics considers how it measures data, as per a bureau spokesperson, Fu Linghui. Fu said a survey found overall unemployment among urban workers was 5.3%, up 0.1 percentage points from June. "The employment situation is generally stable," Fu said.

Growth in consumer spending decelerated to 2.5% over a year earlier in July from the previous month's 3.1%, according to Fu. Growth in factory output slowed to 3.7% from 4.4%, according to Tuesday's data, as export demand plunged after US and European central banks raised interest rates to cool inflation. Investment in factories, real estate and other fixed assets rose 3.8%, down from June's 3.4%.

"A decision to discontinue the youth unemployment figures just after they hit a record high doesn't inspire confidence," said Capital Economics in a report. The People's Bank of China cut the interest rate on a one-week loan to banks to 1.8% from 1.9%.

"Today's cuts suggest that the authorities' concern about the state of the macroeconomy is mounting," said Robert Carrell of ING in a report. "But that doesn't mean that they are about to undertake unorthodox policy measures." Economic growth slid to 0.8% over the previous quarter in the three months ending in June from 2.2% in the January-March period. AP

EXPRESS READ

RESTAURANTS TO HIRE COOKS FROM INDIA

In a move to address workforce shortages in its hotel industry, Singapore has added cooks from India to its list of permissible hires, widening its recruitment pool for certain job positions in the services and manufacturing sectors. Traditionally, employers in Singapore's services and manufacturing sectors have sourced work permit holders from China, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Macau, South Korea, and Taiwan. Establishments desiring to employ Non-Traditional Sources (NTS) work permit holders can submit applications on the ministry's website

EX-PM YASSIN ACQUITTED OF 4 GRAFT CHARGES

Former Malaysian Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin was acquitted by the high court of four corruption charges on Tuesday, just days after his opposition bloc expanded its influence in local elections. Muhyiddin, 76, said the high court ruled in favour of his application to overturn four charges of abusing his power to obtain \$50 mn in bribes for his Bersatu party. He was charged in March and still faces three charges of money laundering involving \$43 million. His lawyer, Hisyam Teh Poh Teik, said the court agreed with the defence contention that charges were defective legally

Argentine peso dips after Trump fan wins primary

BUENOS AIRES

THE Argentine peso plunged on Monday after an anti-establishment candidate who admires former President Donald Trump came first in primary elections that will help determine country's next president.

Javier Milei rocked Argentina's political establishment by receiving the biggest share of primary votes for presidential candidates in the October general election to decide who leads a nation battered by economic woes.

Milei, 52, wants to replace the peso with the dollar, and says that Argentina's Central Bank should be abolished.

He has said that climate change is a lie and has characterised sex education as a ploy to destroy the family. He has also said that the sale of human organs should be legal.

Argentina's government decided to devalue the local currency by 20% early Monday morning after the surprising Sunday showing.

Two mainstream political coalitions have traded power for a decade in Argentina. The country is now the latest where voters have picked an outsider candidate to express anger against the status quo.

Operators were watching nervously on Monday as the value of the peso also decreased in the parallel, or blue, market, dropping 12% by early afternoon. Milei said the government was trying to blame his victory for the depreciation of the currency. AP

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client's Hemalatha Ramanlal and Sandhya Ramanlal, Both are D/o Late Sri.A.Ramanlal, R/at No.88, Osborne Road, Bharathnagar Bangalore-560042 have either misplaced or lost the Original unregistered will dated 7/3/2013 Executed by their Paternal Uncle A.Krishna Bequeathing Both Immovable and Movable properties, including Indiranagar House Property jointly in their favour. So far even after a discreet search made by them it is not found out by them. My clients lodged a Police Complaint dated 9/8/2023 with Bharathnagar Police Station, Bengaluru. The Finder of the said Original will is hereby requested to contact the mobile Number of the Advocate and deliver the same to him and the said person will be suitably rewarded.

Sd/-
K.S. Ramesh, Advocate
No.80, 2nd Floor,
Opp. Mohan Silks and Sarees Balepet
Main Road, Bengaluru-560053
Mr. 9886455210

COURT NOTICE

IN THE COURT OF ADDL. PRINCIPAL JUDGE, ADDL. FAMILY COURT-I, AT RANCHI
Original Suit No. 219 of 2023

RUPESH KUMAR MISHRA ...PLAINTIFF
Versus
NISHA KUMARI JHA ...DEFENDANT
To,
NISHA KUMARI JHA

W/o Shri Rupesh Kumar Mishra D/o Shri Bigyan Jha, Resident, Residing M. J. Lifestyle Apt/Flr, M.J. Nagar Road, Chodasandra, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560099.

Whereas the Plaintiff Rupesh Kumar Mishra has filed the case in this Court U/s 13(1)(i)&(a) of Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 and notice have been issued through the India post, but you have failed to appear before this Court.

You are hereby directed to appear before this Court Physically on 28-08-23 at 10.30 AM to answer the same which the case shall be heard Ex-Parte in your absence in accordance with law.

Given under my hand and seal of this Court 09 August, 2023.

Sd/-
Addl. Principal Judge,
Addl. Family Court-I, Ranchi

DOCUMENTS LOST

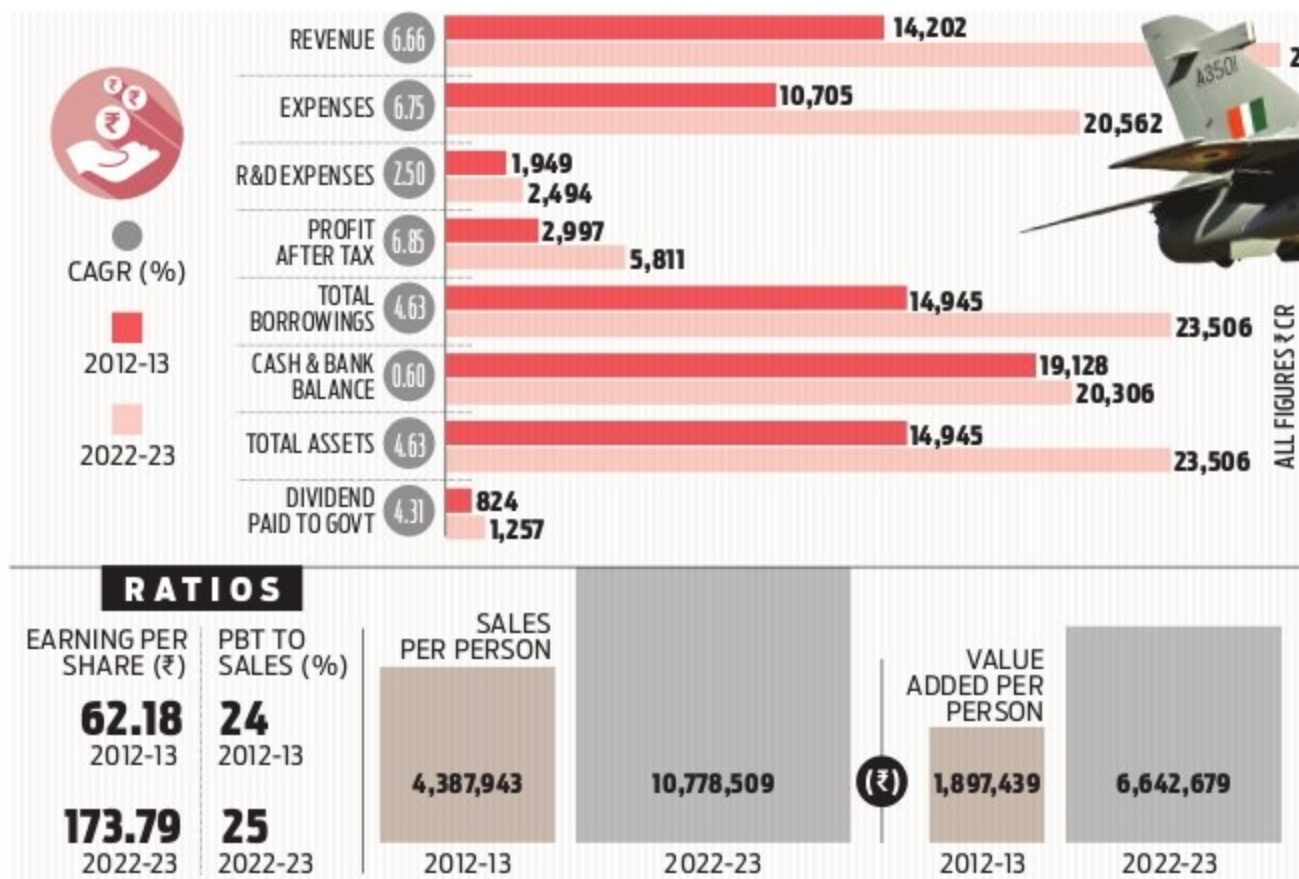
I, L. Subbaraju, S/o. Late. N. Lakshminathraju, aged about 48 years, residing at #29, Next to Sai Café, 10th Cross, Malleswaram, Bengaluru- 560 003, hereby inform to the general public that, in between 27-12-2018 to 06-02-2019 at Malleswaram, Bengaluru, I lost the originals of Allotment Letter and Possession Certificate issued by BDA pertaining to the site property bearing No.1075/A, Vyalikaval, measuring East to West 25.6 square feet and North to South 48 square feet. In this regard I registered a complaint in Lost Report No.024989/2019 dated: 06-02-2019 at Crime Branch, Bengaluru City Police, On 12-08-2023 at Malleswaram, Bengaluru, I also lost the original Sale Deed executed by BDA in favour of Smt. Sundaramma, registered in Book No.1, Document No.BDA-1-02267/2006-07, Stored in C.D. No.BDAD111 dated: 20-07-2006 in the office of the Additional District Registrar, Bengaluru Urban District, in respect of the afore said property. In this regard I registered a complaint in Lost Report No.0682434/2023 dated: 12-08-2023 at Bengaluru City Police. Anybody found/finding any of these documents are requested to hand over the same either to me or to the police station.

L. Subbaraju

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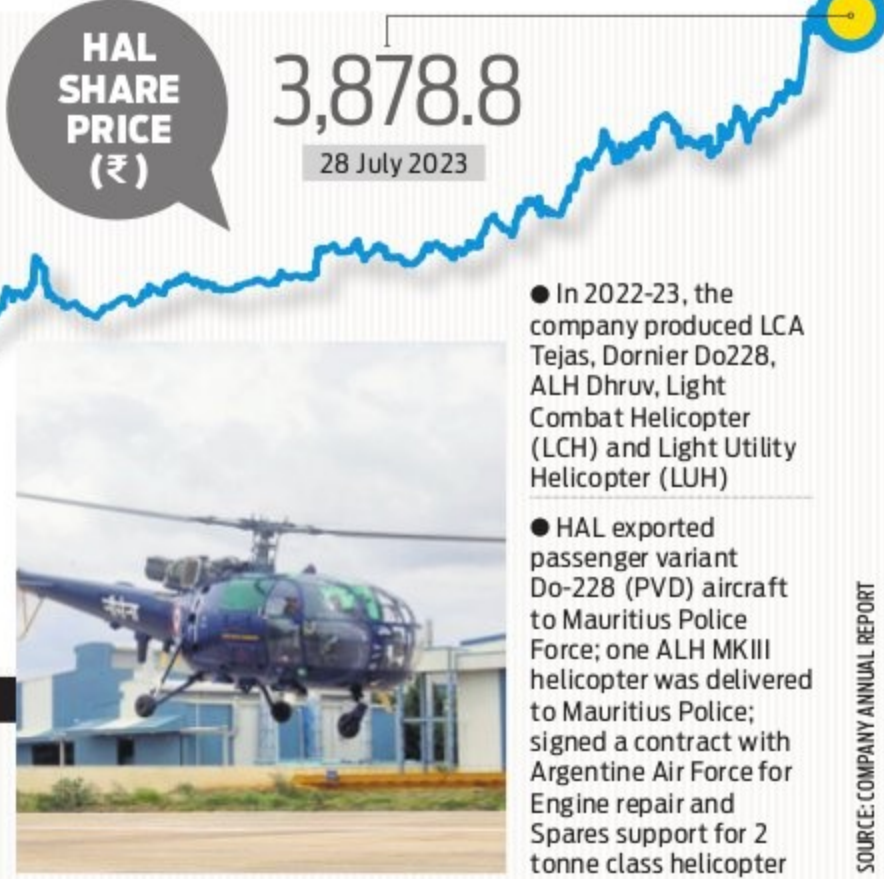


HAL'S JOURNEY OVER 10 YEARS

While speaking in parliament recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi was all praise for HAL which he said 'is touching new heights of success and has registered the highest-ever revenue'. We look at the finances of the government-owned HAL over the past 10 years

MORE CURRENT STATISTICS

81,784 ORDER BOOK (₹ CR)	24,457 NO OF EMPLOYEES	294 EXPORTS (₹ CR)	2082 CAPEX (₹ CR)
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● In 2022-23, the company produced LCA Tejas, Dornier Do228, ALH Dhruv, Light Combat Helicopter (LCH) and Light Utility Helicopter (LUH)

● HAL exported passenger variant Do-228 (PVD) aircraft to Mauritius Police Force; one ALH MKIII helicopter was delivered to Mauritius Police; signed a contract with Argentine Air Force for Engine repair and Spares support for 2 tonne class helicopter

SOURCE: COMPANY ANNUAL REPORT

₹5K cr plan to boost pharma sector

Scheme aims to propel value of pharma industry from current \$50 bn to \$130 bn by 2030

MONIKA YADAV @ New Delhi

HEALTH ministry is set to introduce a comprehensive five-year policy aimed at bolstering research and development (R&D) in the pharmaceutical and medtech sector, according to top government sources.

This initiative will involve an allocation of ₹5,000 crore, spanning from FY24-28. The primary goal of the scheme is to propel the value of pharmaceutical industry from the current \$50 billion to an \$130 billion by 2030.

As part of this policy, the government plans to establish seven centres of excellence in key cities such as Ahmedabad, Kolkata, Raebareilly, Hajipur, Guwahati, Hyderabad, and Mohali. These centres will serve as hubs for advanced research and development activities, fostering collaboration between industry players, academia, and government entities.

In a bid to encourage innova-

₹5,000 CR

5-year plan mooted to boost pharma, medtech sectors

₹17,000 CR

additional investment expected with the launch of the scheme

\$130 BILLION

size of pharma industry the govt aims to achieve by 2030

PLANS AHEAD

30

NEW TECHNOLOGIES OR DRUGS THE GOVERNMENT AIMS TO LAUNCH WITHIN NEXT FIVE YEARS

tion and accelerate progress, financial support will be extended to private companies engaged in in-house research and development across crucial areas such as new drugs, gene therapy, complex generics, bio-similars, medical devices, antimicrobial resistance, and orphan drugs.

Government sources indicate the scheme will attract an additional investment of ₹17,000 crore, further propelling growth and development in the sector. Moreover, the country aims to launch 30 new technologies or drugs into the market within five-year period, emphasizing self-reliance, drug security, and reduced dependence on imports. It is expected to provide a significant boost to start-ups and micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSME), creating an environment conducive to innovation and research in the pharma and medtech sectors. The scheme envisages integration

of artificial intelligence (AI) and data analytics to expedite drug development cycle. The government also aims to establish a regulatory ecosystem that simplifies processes, streamlines clearances, improves the ease of doing business, reduces compliance burden, and reviews relevant laws and regulations to enable necessary amendments.

To incentivise innovation, both private and government-owned companies will receive support in the form of fiscal and non-fiscal incentives. The successful implementation of the policy will involve the formation of three committees.

Gangwal, family to sell shares worth \$450 million in IndiGo

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ New Delhi

RAKESH GANGWAL and family are likely to sell shares up to \$450 million (₹3,735 crore) in InterGlobe Aviation, parent company of IndiGo, through a block deal on Wednesday, as per familiar with the development.

The floor price for the sale by the Gangwals has been kept at ₹2,400 apiece, about 6% lower than the current market price. IndiGo shares closed 1.30% higher at 2,547.50 apiece on the BSE on Monday. Global banks Morgan Stanley, JPMorgan, and Goldman Sachs are said to be investment banks advising the family on the block deal. In June it was rumoured that the Gangwal family was looking to offload 5-8% stake. However, this deal never took place.



As per exchange data, Gangwal and wife, Shobha Gangwal, held 13.23% stake and 2.99% stake, respectively, in the airline while their Chinkerpoo Family Trust held 13.5% stake. This takes the family's holding to little less than 30%. Gangwal and family, after ending a long dispute with co-founder Rahul Bhatia last year, sold 2.75% stake in September 2022 for about ₹2,000 crore. Then they sold 4.17% stake worth ₹2,900 crore in February 2023. Gangwal had re-

signed from IndiGo board in February 2022. Gangwals have put up 1.56 crore shares as part of the sale, about 4% of total outstanding shares in IndiGo. Gangwal and Bhatia, who co-founded IndiGo in 2006, got involved in a public dispute in 2019 when the former blamed Bhatia and related entities for lack of corporate governance and a clause in the company's article of association that prevented co-founders from buying publicly-listed shares in InterGlobe.

Infosys signs \$1.64 bn deal with Liberty Global

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ Bengaluru

IT services company Infosys has bagged a \$1.64 billion deal with Liberty Global, a converged video, broadband and communications company.

This collaboration will bring AI-powered digital entertainment to customers worldwide. The parties have entered into an initial 5-year agreement, with an option to extend to 8 years and beyond.

Infosys will provide services to Liberty Global estimated at \$1.64 billion over the initial five-year term and at \$2.5 billion if the contract is extended to eight years. The collaboration allows Liberty Global to realise run-rate savings in excess of \$109 million per annum, inclusive of other savings and technology investments, the company said. Mike Fries, CEO, Liberty Global, said, "Strengthening and expanding our collaboration with Infosys give our best-in-class solutions new scale with the ability to reach more markets and bring positive experiences to customers." Salil Parekh, CEO and MD, Infosys, said, "This will enable Infosys Topaz with transformative AI-first capabilities to complement the cloud-first digital foundation we have laid for Liberty Global using Infosys Cobalt."

10% incremental CRR to prevent excessive unsecured lending by banks, say experts

SACHIN KUMAR @ Mumbai

RESERVE BANK OF INDIA'S (RBI) decision to drain excess liquidity by imposing 10% incremental cash reserve ratio (ICRR) on banks will help restrict the excessive increase in unsecured lending by the banks, say experts.

Easy availability of liquidity would have prompted banks to disburse more unsecured loans such as personal loans, credit card loans, travel loans, creating risk of payment defaults.

"The increase in liquidity due to withdrawal of ₹2,000 notes would have prompted

banks to channel it to their customers in the form of unsecured loans. When liquidity becomes abundant, banks and customers both have tendency to become imprudent," a banking analyst at rating agency told this newspaper.

"Banks may extend loans to non-deserving customers while some customers may spend this money on things which they do not really need. Imposition of ICRR aims to check this risk by removing additional liquidity from the system," he said.

The RBI on Thursday announced that banks would be required to maintain ICRR of

10% on increase in their deposits between May 19 and July 28, to absorb surplus liquidity of ₹1 lakh crore from the banking system. The decision to withdraw ₹2000 note from circulation has created excess liquidity with banks. The RBI announced on August 1 that nearly 88% of ₹2000 banknotes valued at ₹3.14 lakh crore have returned to the banking system. Out of the total notes returned, about 87% valuing ₹2.73 lakh crore have come back in the form of deposits and the remaining around 13% has been exchanged into other denomination banknotes.

RBI TARGETS EXCESS LIQUIDITY

- ₹1 LAKH CR LIQUIDITY EXPECTED TO BE ABSORBED AFTER IMPOSING INCREMENTAL CASH RESERVE RATIO
- 10% INCREMENTAL CRR IMPOSED ON BANKS BY RESERVE BANK OF INDIA
- ₹2.73 LAKH CR BANKS HAVE RECEIVED AS DEPOSITS AS ON JULY 31 IN FORM OF RETURNED ₹2,000 NOTES



- ₹1.8 LAKH CR OVERALL DAILY ABSORPTION UNDER LIQUIDITY ADJUSTMENT FACILITY IN JULY
- ₹1.7 LAKH CR OVERALL DAILY ABSORPTION UNDER LIQUIDITY ADJUSTMENT FACILITY IN JUNE

EXPRESS READ

Mahindra unveils Thar.e electric SUV concept

NEW DELHI: Mahindra Electric Automobiles Limited (MEAL), a subsidiary of Mahindra & Mahindra, on Tuesday, unveiled Thar.e concept car at its Futurescape event in Cape Town, South Africa. Thar.e will be five-door SUV and will carry new Mahindra logo. The company also unveiled its global tractor brand OJA and the Scorpio-N based pickup truck. ENS

Import from Russia doubled in April-July

NEW DELHI: India's imports from Russia doubled to \$20.45 billion during the April-July period of this fiscal due to increasing inbound shipments of crude oil and fertiliser from that country, according to the commerce ministry data. With this, Russia has become India's second-largest import source during the first four months of this fiscal. The imports were \$10.42 billion during April-July 2022. PTI

5G rollout fastest in India; all set for 6G: Prime Minister

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ New Delhi

INDIA'S 5G rollout is the fastest in the world, and it has reached more than 700 districts in the country, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in his Independence Day speech on Tuesday.

In his address, the Prime Minister also mentioned that India is already preparing for 6G.

"We rolled out 5G. My country is the fastest in the world to roll out 5G. We have reached more than 700 districts. And now we are already preparing for 6G also," he said.

India has launched 5G services in October 2022, since then it has rapidly rolled out 5G service. As per government data, 500 BTSs (3G/4G) have been installed a day since 2014, while 5G sites have been installed at a rate of about 1,000 sites a day.

The government opines India followed the world in 4G, marched with the world in 5G and now aims to lead the world in 6G. Recently, the country launched 'Bharat 6G Vision' document and constituted a taskforce called Bharat 6G Alliance. Highlighting the transformation in India's digital landscape, the Prime Minister said rapid strides have been made in extending Internet connectivity to the remotest corners of the country. Internet access is now reaching every village, ensuring that the benefits of the digital revolution reach every citizen.

He highlighted the days when Internet data tariff were prohibitively expensive before 2014 and contrasted it with the present situation, where India now boasts the world's most affordable internet data rates.

VIL to defer 5G spectrum instalment by a month

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ New Delhi

VODAFONE IDEA LIMITED (VIL) is going to defer its annual 5G spectrum purchase instalment by a month. The company said it is ready to pay the interest for the delay.

"The company has submitted a letter today (Tuesday) to the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), Government of India, that it proposes to pay spectrum auction instalment of ₹1,680 crore, which is due on

August 17, 2023, to DoT, by availing the grace period of 30 days with interest, in accordance with the terms of Notice Inviting Applications (NIA) dated June 15, 2022, for auction of spectrum," said the company in an exchange filing on Monday.

VIL purchased 5G spectrum worth ₹18,799 crore in an auction held in August last year.

The telco has chosen to settle its dues to the government in 20 equal instalments and made the initial payment of ₹1,680 crore in August 2022. In its earnings report for April to June 2023, the company posted a loss of ₹7,840 crore. However, its Average Revenue Per User (ARPU) rose 3% sequentially to ₹139. VIL stated that its 4G cus-

tomers base grew from 122.6 million to 122.9 million compared to the previous quarter. During this quarter, the company lost 4.5 million mobile subscribers, bringing its user base to 221.4 million as of June 2023.

In a separate exchange filing on Monday, the company informed that one of its promoters is ready to infuse ₹2,000 crore in the event of any fund requirement for meeting its impending payment obligation to DoT.

VIL has submitted a letter today (Tuesday) to DoT that it proposes to pay spectrum auction instalment of ₹1,680 crore by availing grace period of 30 days with interest —Vodafone Idea said in an exchange filing



Vinesh out of Asian Games citing knee injury

Though SAI has been apprised of her decision, the ad hoc panel was not until late Tuesday; Focus on Bajrang now

FIROZ MIRZA @ Chennai

A DAY after the ad-hoc committee declared the dates of selection trials for the World Championships, wrestler Vinesh Phogat on Tuesday announced that she won't be competing at the Asian Games because of a knee injury. Vinesh along with Bajrang Punia was given direct entry into the national squad for the Asian Games in September and October. Vinesh's withdrawal means Antim Panghal, who won the Asian Games selection trials, will now represent the country at the quadrennial event in Hangzhou, China. "I wanted to share an extremely sad piece of news. A couple of days ago on 13th August 2023, I injured my left knee in training. After doing the scans and examinations, the doctor has said that unfortunately, surgery is the only option for me to recover," Phogat wrote on a social networking site. "I will be undergoing surgery on 17th August in Mumbai. It was my dream to retain my Asian Games gold medal for India which I won in 2018 in Jakarta. But unfortunately, this injury has ruled out my participation now."

Bajrang and Vinesh were the face of protest against sidelined Wrestling Federation of India president Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh which eventually led to the formation of the ad-hoc panel to run the sport.

Vinesh, a two-time World Championships medallist, also claimed that she has informed all concerned authorities immediately so that the reserve player can be sent. While the Sports Authority of India (SAI) said a message was conveyed to



it, the ad-hoc panel said it was not apprised of the decision until late on Tuesday. "She did not inform the panel about the injury or her decision to pull out as of now," one of the two members of the committee told this daily. The said injury will not only force Vinesh to miss the Asian Games but she has to skip the Worlds as well. The trials to pick the team for the tournament are on August 25 and 26 in Patiala. The Worlds, which is

scheduled in Belgrade, Serbia from September 16 to 24, is also the first qualifier for the 2024 Paris Olympics. Withdrawal might be heartbreaking for Vinesh but it has certainly lifted the spirit of Antim, who is in Amman City, Jordan to defend her U-20 World Championships title. She became the first Indian to be crowned U20 champion when she won the 53kg title last year. "We informed her and she was extremely happy. She said it will help her in fighting with renewed energy in the tournament and defend her title," Ram Niwas Panghal, Antim's father, told this daily.

Vishal's dad challenges Punia

Vinesh's announcement may put pressure on Bajrang as he remains the lone wrestler in the Indian team who accepted a direct entry. Incidentally, Ba-

jrang visited Indian Navy's Raipur Akhada in Sonapat, where he had been training off and on, on Tuesday. While one of his rivals from the 65kg weight category Sujeet Kalkal trains at the Raipur facility, it is Vishal Kaliraman, the one to win the Asian Games trials but was made a stand-by by the ad-hoc panel, who could intensify his bid for inclusion in the national team.

And his father, Subhash, fired the fresh salvo on Tuesday. "Vinesh has withdrawn, now Bajrang should decide soon. Give Vishal one bout. Choose the venue and let us know. If you win, compete in the Asian Games but if you lose, let Vishal represent the country," Subhash said. A khap panchayat was also held in Sisai village on Monday in support of Vishal, who hails from the place.

Final list of players for Asiad must be released soon

WITH just over a month left for the Asian Games to begin, the sports ministry and the Sports Authority of India are yet to clear names of players for the quadrennial event slated from September 23 to October 9. Though the ministry has made a concession for football and sanctioned 15 teams including basketball and volleyball, the players' lists are yet to be finalised.

Though some players and coaches are certain they will make it to the team, there are some who are yet not sure. This has its own drawback. The names of all players have been finalised by July 15 (the last date to send the entry by name to the organising committee) except wrestling, which was sent on July 23 (as an exception case). It has been over three weeks but the ministry and the SAI have not cleared the names. Or at least the list is still not released. It is already late.

The delay in the release of names is causing quite a bit of concern among non-priority sports because the authorities are not sure whether the names will be cleared at cost to the government or not. Recently the Commonwealth Youth Games in Trinidad and Tobago was cleared at no cost to the government and the Indian Olympic Association had to take care of the expenses. It needs to be seen if the IOA does the same in case some athletes are cleared in a similar fashion.

There is another concern among officials: whether the athletes or teams will meet government criteria? While some say that if concession has been given to football, exceptions should be made for individual players as well. Take for instance gymnast

Dipa Karmakar, who finished fourth in the 2016 Rio Olympics. She has topped the Asian Games trials in gymnastics and has requested the sports ministry to clear her name as an exception because she doesn't meet sports ministry criteria. Even the Gymnastics Federation of India has requested them. Yet as on Tuesday, she is not sure if her request has been considered.

Certain sports like swimming have already reduced their numbers (women's team). There is pressure to reduce players in sports like rowing, fencing, and other non-priority sports. There are certain teams that would want to reach by September 5-6, well ahead of the Opening Ceremony on September 23. Some would want to reach at least more than a week ahead of their events. Like one coach pointed out athletes need to prepare mentally as well, especially closer to the Games.

Even the Indian Olympic Association should be requesting the ministry to release the names. For them, it is worrisome. The Ceremonial Kit tendering process itself was delayed and got over just a couple of days ago. Interestingly, the number of dresses that they have mentioned in the tender is 700 set for men and 300 for women. With barely a month left, getting the dresses ready might be touch and go. And also the playing kits for the athletes. They have to get the garments ready according to their sizes. That too requires time. Other logistics like ticketing, accommodation and others need to be taken care of by both the IOA and the ministry. Certain sports like sailing will need to transfer their equipment to China, which is again a tedious process and had faced issues last edition.



FLIPSIDE

INDRANEEL DAS

Riddle in the middle for India before world exam at home

GOMESH S @ Chennai

ON Monday, a video from the KSCA 'B' grounds in Bengaluru shared on social media went viral. The video involved three prominent cricketers: KL Rahul and Shreyas Iyer, who can be seen batting in the middle, and the third was Rishabh Pant, who actually recorded the clip and had shared it on his Instagram.

Less than a year ago, the three were integral part of the Indian middle-order (anywhere between 4-6). Now, Pant is out of action for the World Cup after that gruesome and unfortunate accident last year. The other two were actually involved in match simulation in the video, racing against the clock to get fit for the Asia Cup and the global event. Rahul has been out of action since the IPL due to thigh injury, while Shreyas was sidelined even before due to back injury. In the mean time, the Indian team management has tried to find replacements/back-ups to fill in the vacant slots but after the West Indies series, one is still not clear about the direction in which they are going.

One has to keep in mind that some slots are almost fixed. The top three of the first XI in ODIs is set. Rohit Sharma, Shubham Gill and Virat Kohli. Hardik Pandya has his place sorted in No. 5/6, which leaves two vacant spots. The bottom half of the playing XI is likely to include either of Ravindra Jadeja or Axar Patel, one more spinner and the three pacers.

In Indian conditions R Ashwin also could be a handful and cannot be discounted. If all goes well, one could see Mohammed Shami, Mohammed Siraj and Jasprit Bumrah, who will be making a comeback in Ireland later this week walk into those positions. Which is why, how Bumrah, and Prasad Krishna, who is also coming back from an injury, fare in the T20Is against Ireland will be of monumental importance. If either of them go down, the options at hand seem to be Shardul Thakur, Umran Malik and Mukesh Kumar.

Which brings the question



India captain Rohit Sharma and coach Rahul Dravid | AFP

INDIA'S ODI FIXTURES BEFORE WC

Sep 2	-	vs Pakistan
Sep 4	-	vs Nepal
Sep 10	-	vs TBD
Sep 12	-	vs TBD
Sep 15	-	vs TBD
Sep 17	-	Asia Cup final*
Sep 22	-	vs Australia
Sep 24	-	vs Australia
Sep 27	-	vs Australia

* If India qualify for the final

back to the contentious No. 4 slot and one more batting option in the middle-order. Make no mistake, the Indian team has tried Suryakumar Yadav at 4, but hasn't worked. Sanju Samson, too, did not make an impact. And by the look of it, the team management seems keen on making Yadav work at No. 6 and are confident that Rahul will be back in the XI to take the No. 4 slot and don the gloves too. What seems a bit worrisome is lack of proven backups for those positions. Ishan Kishan who kept wickets in the Caribbean, opened the batting with Sharma moving down the order. If Kishan is the backup keeper/batter, wouldn't it have been better to let him have a go in the middle? Similarly, should Iyer not make the cut or gets injured again, Yadav or Samson seem to

be only back-up options at the moment. But neither have grabbed the chances nor have they got a consistent run in a specific role without an axe hanging over their heads.

There is, however, one other name that is now thrown into the mix. Tilak Varma. The youngster has ticked all the right boxes on his debut in the T20 format. Middle-order bat, check. Left-hander, check. Can roll the arm, an added advantage. What remains to be seen is how the selection committee led by Ajit Agarkar and the team management assesses Rahul and Iyer in the match simulation at the National Cricket Academy. And whether they will take the plunge to carry Varma to Sri Lanka and give him a go should either of them, especially Iyer, isn't able to get fit in time for the Asia Cup.

India's run to the semifinal in the 2019 World Cup was largely on the back of the top-three that did the heavy-lifting with the bat. The current top-three have only one change and are still capable of having a similar run, especially in home conditions. However, if India want to avoid what happened in the semifinal last time around, they would do better to have clear cut roles for the players below Kohli in the line-up and have specific back-ups for them as well. For they have just nine ODIs before their biggest challenge begins.

Carlsen downs Gukesh, Arjun trumps Pragg

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICES @ Chennai

MAGNUS Carlsen produced a typically great rook endgame to beat D Gukesh in the first of the two-legged quarterfinal affair at the ongoing Chess World Cup. Both players had the same no. of pieces on the board — three pawns and a rook — but the Norwegian, playing with black, had the positional advantage after the 17-year-old teen failed to find the only defensive alternative in his 35th move.

While Gukesh tried to fight, this is essentially the problem when playing the former world champion as he grounds down opponents before striking them down with his superior endgame nous. This was Gukesh's first loss in the tournament. The India No. 1 now faces the unenviable prospect of having to beat Carlsen with black pieces to stay alive.

One Indian who did finish on the positive side was **Arjun Erigaisi** as beat compatriot and



close friend, R Praggnanandhaa. The latter now needs to win on demand with black pieces to force the tie to a tie-breaker. The last Indian on show on Tuesday — Vidit Gujrathi — failed to capitalise a favourable endgame scenario as he ended up drawing against Nijat Abasov. One of those two will go through as long as they can find a win on Wednesday. If not this match will also go into a tie-break.

Each of the top three finishers at the World Cup will earn a place at next year's Candidates where the winner of that tussle will earn the right to face Ding Liren in the next World Championships.

Selvamani shines in Int'l Surf Open

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICES @ Chennai

THE International Surf Open, World Surf League (WSL) Qualifying Series (QS) 3,000 event, got off to an excellent start with competitors from India, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Australia vying for top honours. The tricky conditions at Mahabalipuram Beach offered clean two-foot waves for the first time in the meet.

The second heat of the day saw Sanjay Selvamani make history as he became the first-ever Indian to claim a heat win in a World Surf League event. Hailing from nearby Kovalam, Selvamani had plenty of surfing experience at Mahabalipuram and it showed as he picked off a number of long right-hand runners to take the heat win in only his second QS event appearance.

"We have been so excited for this event to come to India so it's great to finally have it all



Sanjay Selvamani became first-ever Indian to claim a heat win in a WSL event

underway," said Selvamani. "We know the waves here can get so much better than they are today so we're hoping it continues to improve throughout the window. I have been surfing for nine years now and having this event here shows all the Indian surfers that there are opportunities to travel to other surf spots in this region to compete and continue

to improve. This is such an exciting time for Indian surfers," he added.

Other standout performer was Sri Lanka's Lakshitha Madushan (LKA), who posted the highest two-wave total of the day. Maldivian competitor Yousuf Zaki (MDV) and Saijakkumar S (IND) also took convincing heat wins in the Round of 56.

EXPRESS READ

Veteran Venus upsets seeded Kudermetova

CINCINNATI: Venus Williams scored a straight sets upset of 16th seed Veronika Kudermetova at the ATP/WTA Cincinnati Open on Monday, bagging her first win over a top 20 player in four years. The 43-year-old rallied superbly to polish off Kudermetova 6-4, 7-5. The seven-time Grand Slam singles champ showed great heart to recover from 4-1 down in the opening set before overturning a 5-1 deficit in the second.

SL's Hasaranga retires from Test cricket

COLOMBO: Sri Lankan all-rounder Wanindu Hasaranga announced his retirement from Test cricket as he seeks to prolong his career in limited-over format of the game. The Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) said it has accepted the decision of the 26-year-old Hasaranga. "We will accept his decision and are confident that Hasaranga will be a vital part of our white-ball programme going forward," said SLC CEO Ashley De Silva.

Cummins eyes return during India series

SYDNEY: Recovering from a left wrist injury, Australia captain Pat Cummins on Tuesday said he is eyeing a return to international cricket during his side's three-match ODI series against India in late September, ahead of the World Cup. The pace bowler is set to miss Australia's five-match ODI series against South Africa between September 7 and 17.

Eng to host Zim in Tests for first time since 2003

LONDON: England will host a Test match against Zimbabwe for the first time since 2003 following discussions between the country's boards to forge closer relations. The four-day Test will take place in May 2025 at a venue yet to be confirmed. The 2003 Test series between the teams was notable for the debut of England pace bowler James Anderson.

AGENCIES @ Auckland

DEFENDER Olga Carmona conjured up "a work of art" to send Spain into their first Women's World Cup final in history on Tuesday and a clash with Australia or England. The skipper capped a frenetic ending to the semifinal at Eden Park in Auckland with a rocket to give Spain a thrilling 2-1 victory over Sweden.

Proceedings seemed to be drifting towards extra time before suddenly bursting to life when substitute Salma Paraluelo put Spain ahead with nine minutes left. Rebecca Blomqvist equalised in the 88th minute only for full-back Carmona to score with a superb shot in off the underside of the crossbar from the edge of the box 60 sec-



Spain's Olga Carmona (19) rejoices after scoring the second goal against Sweden | AFP

onds later. "We knew it would be a really demanding game mentally," Spain coach Jorge Vilda said.

"But they showed they were prepared because in the last minute Olga appeared to pro-

duce the work of art she did to take us through."

Spain's place in Sunday's final in Sydney is a remarkable journey for a nation who had never previously gone beyond the last 16 at a Women's World

RESULTS: Spain 2-1 Sweden

Today's match

Australia vs England, 3:30 PM

Live on DD Sports and FanCode

Cup. And for Vilda it is vindication. Fifteen Spanish players told their federation last September that they no longer wished to be considered for selection, mainly out of unhappiness with Vilda and his methods.

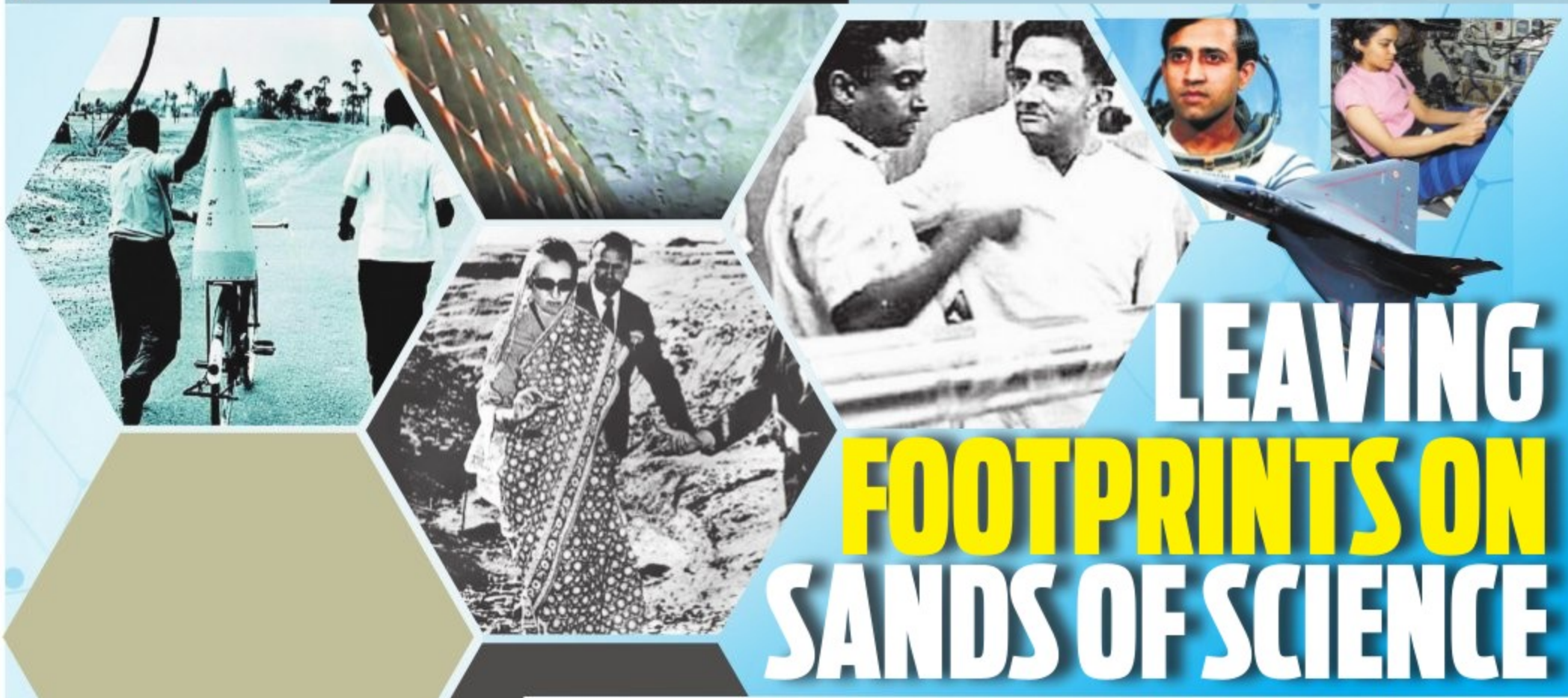
Only three of them returned for this World Cup but Spain have barely noticed their absence. While their dream of World Cup glory remains alive, Sweden are left with a familiar feeling after going so far at another major tournament before falling short.

AGENCIES @ New Delhi

MOHAMMED Habib, the playmaker par excellence of the 1970s who scored against Pele's New York Cosmos in Mohun Bagan colours and made the football icon take note of his game, died on Tuesday. The former India player was 74.

Habib, who was suffering from dementia and Parkinson's syndrome for the past couple of years, breathed his last in Hyderabad, his birthplace. Habib was survived by his wife and three daughters. A bronze medallist in the 1970 Asian Games in Bangkok under the captaincy of fellow Hyderabad Syed Nayeemuddin and manager PK Banerjee, Habib has represented the big three of Kolkata Maidan — Mohun Bagan, East Bengal and

Mohammed Sporting in his heydays, dominating the Mecca of Indian football for a prolonged period in the late 1960s through to the 70s. Following a successful career that saw him gain legendary status and earn the tag of the country's first "true professional" footballer for his refusal to accept numerous job offers that came his way owing to his on-field heroics, Habib took to coaching at the Tata Football Academy (TFA). Later, he also acted as chief coach of the Indian Football Association academy in Haldia. At a time when the clubs would pay meagre sum to their best players, he was unruffled and remained a professional in true sense throughout his career, for he considered playing football as his real and only profession.



LEAVING FOOTPRINTS ON SANDS OF SCIENCE

Sir Cyril Radcliffe sat in his stucco bungalow in the viceregal estate in the sweltering summer heat of Delhi in 1947. His task was vivisection, and his mantra was speed. Never before had the fate of so many been decided by one man - an enormous task that began by drawing the boundary lines on a Royal Engineers' map. India's destiny was sealed. A nation was born and one-fifth of the world shook its colonial chains to earth like dew. A country once in tumult, fraught with schisms, stormed by uncertainties, pillaged by the rapacious East India Company, and then wrung dry by an Empire, has traversed an arduous path to 76 years of Independence. As a nation basked in the dazzling rays of freedom, a system of governance was thrashed out in the Constituent Assembly, and its guiding principles were delineated in an elephantine Constitution. The stage was set but there were promises to keep and miles to go. Progress was impossible without scientific prowess. Disparaged as the land of 'snake charmers and fortune tellers' the gentle waves of scientific temper shaped the shores for a behemoth which would hold the world in its thrall. **The New Indian Express** looks back at the nation's epochal moments in science

HRITHIK KIRAN BAGADE & ROHIT BOSE

STREETS would be deserted, homes empty, shops closed and at times, buses would halt plying when India was playing a test match on foreign soil. People would be huddled in front of a television which a family owned or would be sitting in circles around a transistor. The faint cackling radiating from the boxes would stir the air. Most families had no television at home. They were either too costly to afford or considered superfluous, and the elders condemned it as an obnoxious element. The pictures on the screen would fluctuate and often the audience would miss some action. A boy would rush to fix the antennas during rain and gusty days.

In July 1975, over 100 agog villagers of a hamlet, Pij in Kheda district of Gujarat huddled in front of a wooden box with a blank screen. After some time, the screen flickered with visuals of a discussion in the local language. This was India's first rural television telecast, and the man with the TV remote was Dr Vikram Sarabhai steering the Atomic Energy Commission and bringing home signals of transformation with the Khera Communications Project, which bagged the Unesco prize for rural communication efficiency in 1984.

A non-aligned nation since its

inception, India launched its first satellite in 1975 from Kapustin Yar, a Soviet rocket launch and development site. Aryabhata was built by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), and a pact was signed between India and the Soviet Union in 1972, directed by UR Rao, the former Isro chairman, and "The Satellite Man of India", who had worked under Dr Sarabhai. Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh said in 2022 that Isro has launched a total of 129 satellites of Indian origin and 342 foreign satellites belonging to 36 countries since 1975.

After the Raj-Roberts left, scientific research was a smidgen 0.1% of the GNP, which later exceeded 1%. With Jawaharlal Nehru at the vanguard of fanning technology and exhorting experts and scientists, a chain of new research labs were set up. The Cambridge-educated Homi J Bhabha founded and directed two major scientific institutions - the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research in Mumbai, which housed India's first mainframe computer, and the Atomic Energy Commission to steer the country's nuclear power plants. Five IITs were inaugurated between 1954 and 1964 to bolster technical capabilities.

With the arms race skyrocketing global tensions, the Mahatma's land entered the field with "Smiling Buddha" when a "peaceful" nuclear explosion was carried out in Pokhran in 1974. Indira Gandhi had sanctioned it in

1972, a year after the Liberation of Bangladesh. It was a "near failure", claimed a secret US assessment in 1996 inexplicably. Another chair was brought in for the new member of the nuclear members' club. The second chapter of the Pokhran path came in 1998 when Atal Bihari Vajpayee gave the nod for five nuclear explosions spanning two days under operation Shakti.

Chandrayaan-1 launched in 2008 discovered the presence of Hydroxyl, water molecules on lunar surface, created 3D conceptualisation of many craters and detailed map of the lunar surface features. Isro became the fourth space agency to blast a spacecraft to Mars orbit in 2013, which captured the solar coral dynamics, and its observation showed for the first time that oxygen exceeded carbon dioxide at a particular altitude. AstroSat in 2015 became India's first space astronomy observatory which made a rare discovery with its first detection of FUV photons from the Lyman Alpha emitting galaxy.

Nothing could have appeared more insuperable than the numbers and science behind India's first general elections in 1952 spearheaded by Sukumar Sen, an ICS and a gold medalist in mathematics. For around 176 million eligible Indians aged above 21, there was universal adult suffrage who would vote for 4,500 seats across 2,24,000 booths, and seal their decisions in 2 million steel ballot boxes.

PACE OF PROGRESS

SCIENCE TO WIN FREEDOM IN ITS TRUEST SENSE

Seventy-six years ago, free India's first Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's call for kindling the scientific temper among Indians remains ever-relevant today, and will remain so in future. It was not a political call. It was a call for development - of mind, body and the nation. In his famous "Tryst with destiny" speech at the stroke of the midnight hour when India stepped into the world of freedom, he said: "The service of India means the service of the millions who suffer. It means the ending of poverty and ignorance and disease and inequality of opportunity." A decade earlier, Nehru had declared while stressing on the importance of freeing the country not just from the British, but also from deprivation and backwardness, "It is science alone that can solve these problems of hunger and poverty, of insanitation and illiteracy, of superstition and the deadening custom and tradition, of vast resources running to waste, of a rich country inhabited by starving people." In the last 76 years, India has significantly progressed in science and technology, and will continue to do so at a faster pace in future. And yet, we have continued to be at the mercy of communal, caste-based, linguistic and region-based hatred. We are yet to achieve that zone "where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection; where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit...". to quote from Rabindranath Tagore's famous poem "Where The Mind Is Without Fear..." Science has no age. It is all-pervading, everlasting, encompassing countless galaxies in the universe, each with millions of stars. So, there is no reason why people in a country called India, located on pale blue dot we call Earth, cannot benefit from it to achieve freedom in its truest sense, and set an example.



Simply

SCIENTIFICO

Science is a world in itself. Here are some interesting facts that connect with you

Nirad Mudur

STRIDES WE MADE

Telecom Industry



The 170-years-old Indian telecom sector began to evolve in 1985 when the government separated the Department of Post and Telegraph, by setting up the Department of Posts and the Department of Telecommunications. From landlines in some homes to a chain of STD/ISD booths, the country became second largest telecom market in the world, with a subscriber base of over 1.17 billion today. India is slated to see 350 mn 5G subscriptions by 2026



Space Science

Through the 1950s, India worked to emerge as a spacefaring nation, setting up a network of research centres. ISRO became the central force to guide India's space future. Launching its first satellite - 'Aryabhata' - in 1975, today ISRO has the world's largest constellation of remote-sensing satellites, and has launched missions to the Moon and Mars. Not to forget astronauts Rakesh Sharma and Kalpana Chawla, who inspired a nation to dream



Information Technology

It was decades ago that India realised its true potential in IT. The 'Bhabha Committee' created a 10-year plan laying the foundation for the country's IT services industry. In 1967, TCS was established in Mumbai, emerging as a pre-eminent software exporter. In 1991, PARAM 8000 - India's first supercomputer, came up in Pune. Today, the country is home to 15 supercomputers. India is the largest exporter of IT products and services today



Aviation

In the 1950s, the country had a sizeable number of carriers, which were merged to form two large state-owned airline giants, Air India and Indian Airlines, post nationalisation of the sector under the Air Corporations Act, 1953. As of 2023, India has nearly 500 airports/airstrips. There is a push for regional connectivity, making flying more affordable. Reports suggest India is set to overtake the UK as the third-largest air passenger market by 2024

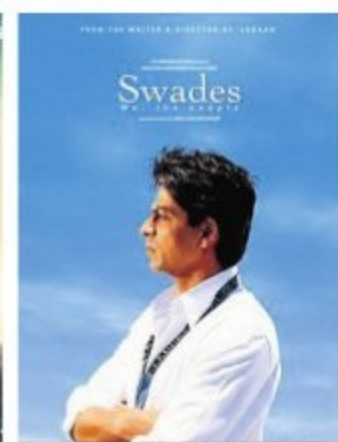
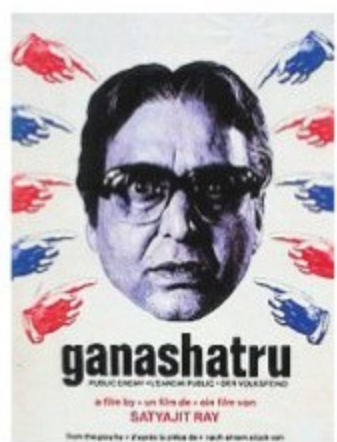
STITCHING SCENES OF MISSION & DETERMINATION

ROHIT BOSE

EXPLAINING why characters in his movies abstain from household chores or even take a bath if they are not getting killed, Alfred Hitchcock said that audiences do not come to the theatres to watch their prosaic scenes at home being depicted on screen; it damages the magic. Movies are meant to entertain and be an ephemeral escape from reality.

But heroes are not just made by action and dancing and singing. Sometimes they can be astronauts and scientists, taking their nation through the uncharted territories of science. Indian movies have tried to capture or build plots around scientific achievements. Some of them clung to the audience-approved parameters and structures. But OTT platforms have taken a different orbit.

The Rocket Boys has near-perfect casting and delves into, with profound research, the lives and the relationships shared by the



two pillars of our nation's scientific progress - Homi J Bhabha and Dr Vikram Sarabhai. As a nation grapples with food scarcity, poverty, and illiteracy, they dream of giving the people a scientific course of life.

Adjudged a flop and almost ineliminable, Swades brought into the mainstream the great canyon that exists between science and the rural population. Based on the lives of Aravinda Pillalamarri and Ravi Kuchimanchi, who returned to their motherland to develop a pedal power generator,

the film punches the audience with raw realism of the grassroots and that rockets and rovers do not always reflect a nation's surge of science. Released on Independence Day four years ago, Mission Mangal deals with the launch of India's first interplanetary expedition, the Mars Orbiter Mission by Isro, but filled with the extravaganza of a "masala movie". However, it was a deliberate effort to reach out to a larger audience whose space ken is patry, and have no wish to invest in a physics lecture at least in the

theatres. With the film garnering around Rs 290 crore, Mangalyaan was accomplished in an estimated Rs 450 crore, making it the most economical Mars mission, which the plot hammers on.

With adventure in every shot, Parmanu: The Story of Pokhran, showed the other side of the political triumph of the nuclear tests in 1998 - how the Indian Army outwitted the CIA. With a cursory look into diplomacy and global ramifications, the film transmits the tension that men at the cusp of history have to han-

dle and a significant chapter when India claimed her place in an elite club was put on celluloid.

Jawaharlal Nehru wanted to instill a scientific temper in the nation. When Satyajit Ray made Ganashatru: Enemy of the People, based on Henrik Ibsen's play, he was pilloried for attacking religious belief because a doctor tries to warn people about bacteria in the holy waters of a temple in the movie. What Ray wanted to convey was the mammoth influence of faith that dwarfs rationale, and the plot was emblematic of various primitive practices prevalent in society.

There is of course no movie on the scale of Oppenheimer and Interstellar but comparisons overshadow the impact of such films and others to bring science into mainstream productions, starring top actors and directed by bigwigs. It is laudable that some of the country's milestones are now etched in cinematic history, opening up opportunities for pure science plots in the future.



DAY'S DIARY

Awards to honour

Satyajit Ray's *Pather Panchali* won an award for Feature Length Motion Picture at the Vancouver Film Festival on this day in 1958

BACKGROUND

The film is based on a Bengali novel by the same name written by Bibhutibhusan Bandyopadhyay, marking Ray's debut as a director and features inexperienced actors



RECOGNITION

Sixty years after its release, the film continues to enjoy iconic stature in the world of cinema. It won the Best Human Document at the 1956 Cannes Film Festival



RAY'S ACCOLADE

In 1992, Ray was awarded an Honorary Oscar, the first Indian to be honoured with such an award, which he accepted being bedridden

Looking Back Looking Forward

PG 3



THE BIG-FAT-INDIAN WEB SERIES

Actor Sobhita Dhulipala, and directors Alankrita Shrivastava and Neeraj Ghaywan discuss *Made in Heaven*, Tara's fierceness and what constitutes a perfect wedding

KARTIK BHARDWAJ

IN 2019 when it premiered, the pilot episode of *Made in Heaven* took us into the shallow, glitzy realm of Indian marriages. It also gave us a taste into the dog-eat-dog world of Delhi society. The episode concludes with the bride agreeing to tie the knot, despite her in-laws putting up a private detective on her. Understandable. The groom's net worth is ₹5,000 crore. "...An outsider has clawed her way into the inside," says the series' moral-spewer Kabir (Shashank Arora), in a voiceover. "But only time will tell if she gets accepted. Till then, welcome to Delhi."

"So much of *Made in Heaven* comes from my knowledge of Delhi," says the show's writer and director Alankrita Shrivastava, who grew up in the capital and studied filmmaking at the central Jamia Millia Islamia University. "Delhi is a city where power is at the centre of everything. Not just money power but also political clout. Here, you are constantly asked where you live and what your father does."

Neeraj Ghaywan, the new creative entrant in the series' latest season, interjects with an anecdote. "Back in my corporate days, I was once recruiting in Delhi. This one applicant calls me and asks where he can park his 'Esteem'. The fact that he couldn't say 'car' without telling me its brand name says so much about the city."

On the surface, *Made in Heaven* is a story of two wedding planners: Tara Khanna (Sobhita Dhulipala) and Karan Mehra (Arjun Mathur) and how they mitigate the messiness of marriages. At the core, it is about two outsiders, scratching their nails on the door to get to the inside. The recently-released second season sees Tara rebuilding her life while negotiating a divorce with her husband Adil (Jim Sarbh). "She undergoes an identity transformation of sorts," says Sobhita. "Her wings are opening up but it is happening at a cost."

Tara finds herself

This season sees Tara being more assertive and unapologetic. She even seduces and manipulates her soon-to-be ex-husband to flip the terms of their divorce settlement. "She is a



So much of *Made in Heaven* comes from my knowledge of Delhi. It's a city where power is at the centre of everything. You are constantly asked where you live and what your father does

Alankrita Shrivastava, director

terrific fire," says Sobhita. "But it is this greyness that makes her human."

In the last installment, the image that stuck with audiences was Tara, draped in gold jewellery, lounging in a bathtub as she vainly smokes a cigarette. It was a moment that completely turned the 'gold digger' stereotype on its head. "That scene was the definition of who she is and what she desires," says Alankrita. "As a writer, I had no judgement in creating Tara as a character who just wants more from life."

Bigger, blingier

The creators weren't willing to compromise on their vision for season 2, even when the pandemic hampered the creative process. Sharing insights into how they envisioned season 2, Alankrita says, "We definitely wanted to scale up. Bigger weddings, more of a guest cast."

They bagged an eclectic mix: Mrunal Thakur, Radhika Apte, Dia Mirza, Shibani Dandekar, Sanjay Kapoor, Samir Soni, Neelam Kothari and endearing

came by fashion designer Sabyasachi Mukherjee and director Anurag Kashyap. "I think a lot of people came on the show because they really liked season 1," says Alankrita. "They just wanted to be a part of it. We got lucky, I guess."

A new creator onboard

At first glance, director Neeraj Ghaywan, known for *Masaan* (2015) and *Sacred Games* (2018), might seem mismatched in the world of *Made in Heaven*. "I was a bit apprehensive when I was approached," shares Neeraj. "The series was different from something I had ever done before. It was a challenge, I wanted to get my teeth in."

Neeraj has directed two episodes in season 2: the third one, starring Sanjay Kapoor, Neelam Kothari and Samir Soni, a cheeky reunion of the stars of *Fabulous Lives of Bollywood Wives* (2020), and the widely-talked-about Episode 5, featuring Radhika Apte exchanging vows at a Dalit Buddhist wedding. "There were some episodes where we thought it would be nice to have Neeraj on-board," says Alankrita. "You might look at our director list (Reema Kagti, Zoya Akhtar, Alankrita Shrivastava, Nitya Mehra and Neeraj Ghaywan) and think oh, 'too many cooks' but it has been a smooth sail."

The perfect wedding

Apart from widening the creator pool, this season also saw the weddings becoming grander and one even takes place in France. "I think the perfect wedding is the most difficult to shoot," says Neeraj. "You have a set of 300 people and to get it all together in a day can be challenging. But it was still absolutely fun."

Although there are a lot of things that should be in sync on a set, what is something that can't go wrong in both weddings and film sets? Alankrita and Neeraj speak over each other: "The food!"



Painting a full picture

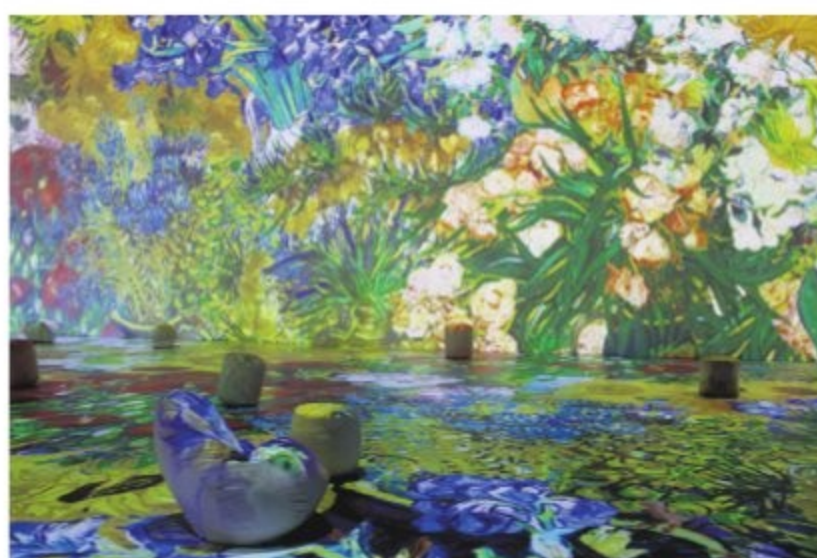
Get a 360-degree view into the life and works of celebrated painter Van Gogh at this immersive experience

SRUSHTI KULKARNI

SEEING an unprecedented amount of interest after its debut in Delhi, the Van Gogh 360 Immersive Experience has been creating quite the buzz here in Bengaluru. Offering art enthusiasts a journey through the life and works of the legendary 19th-century post-Impressionist painter Vincent Van Gogh, the 45-minute walkthrough gives us a quick glimpse into various facets of the artist's life.

As we approach the venue, an enormous outdoor tent enveloped in starry night-themed banners, hints at the visual delight that awaits us. Before stepping in, however, we make sure to quickly click pictures on the Sunflower photo booth set-up opposite the box office, which has been designed keeping his famous sunflowers artwork in mind as they were flowers that communicated gratitude.

A soothing instrumental soundtrack sets the ambience for the immersive adventure, which begins with the education room, where vibrant pan-



els with backlights showcase Van Gogh's brushstrokes and masterpieces, accompanied by overlaid text that narrates Vincent's life story.

The celebrated artist's massive canon, comprising an estimated 2,100 paintings and drawings, was created within a mere 10-year period, with around 860 of them produced in the last two years of his life. The chronicles highlight aspects of his mental health, self-portraits and even the association of his renowned painting, *The Starry Night*, with Don McLean's song which

goes by a similar name.

After delving into the artist's life, we are led to the main hall – a room adorned with 360-degree projections on all four walls and the floor, on which you can freely commute. Once inside, you can either plop onto the white bean bags sprinkled across the room or go around the room to enjoy the projections from various angles. The show begins with a title sequence before the screens transform into Van Gogh's *The Sower* painting setting the ambience. These projections are animated by merging his various artworks like *The Potato Eaters*, *Noon Rest From Work*, *Bulb Fields*, *Head of a Skeleton with a Burning Cigarette*, *The Bedroom* and *Torso of Venus*.

The experience feels therapeutic when paintings like *Almond Blossom* and *Sunflowers* come together with twirling



flowers. You know the show is to conclude when you spot a luminous yellow crescent and shimmering stars slowly transporting us into the heart of Van Gogh's iconic *Starry Night* painting. One of the most enchanting aspects was elements from one painting merging into the frame to introduce the next set of artworks. However, we recommend not moving too much along with the running elements on the screen, as that might be a tad dizzying.

Like all immersive spaces, we find ourselves in a colourful gift shop filled with an array of Van Gogh's merchandise, paintings-adorned postcards, apparels, and trinkets. We look around with the promise to return.

(Priced at ₹1,099 onwards, the show is on till September 3, at Bhartiya Mall Of Bengaluru, Thanisandra Main Road)

ALTERNATING TO A BRIGHTER FUTURE

This Independence Week, product designers and environmentalists have conjured up ways to celebrate in an eco-friendly way

TUNIR BISWAS

AS the week of the 77th year of Independence is upon us, one can see how the city is dressed in the tricolour. From vendors selling tiny flags on cars to shops donning giant ones on their windows – the country is feeling proud. But historically, we have learned to celebrate more wisely, especially with regards to the safety of the environment. Plastic flags and rubber balloons are looked down upon. Thankfully, the city has enough people working for the green cause.

Environment and sustainability changemaker Odette Katrak has been working tirelessly to impact how people do everyday things. "Not enough is happening. A week before I-Day, you can see balloons cut and plastic flags being available on the streets, though I must say it has reduced in number. We, as part of our organisation Beautiful Bharat, have been campaigning about the risks of using balloons. There are alternative ways of celebrating an occasion mainly using flowers, papers and cloths. Flowers are the best when used for colours. The other would be reusable paper. For cloth, tailors across the country have scraps that they eventually dump somewhere. If you ask one for theirs, they will happily give it to you. You can use different colours depending on the festival," shares Katrak.

When it comes to the artistic side, sustainable product designer Maria Joseph has created an art piece called the Indian monobloc chair, which is covered in mycomaterial (mushrooms, in this case) as a symbol 'for the ubiquitous Indian plastic chair vs the quiet eco revolution in the country'. Joseph elaborates, "I have been working with mycomaterials



The art piece 'Indian monobloc chair' created by Maria Joseph and Nuvvedo

for a year now and this year in India a growing material workshop happened for the first time. For example, if you take the roots of the mushroom, it will take the shape of the raw material you put it in. I believe the monobloc chair is a symbol of democratic design: it can live without context. I wanted to take this chair and use it as a symbol for the future. I want to introduce the use of mycomaterials growing from the ground and taking over plastic, while alive and decomposing. India is in a state of transition and I wanted to depict that."

Roshan Ray, founder of Seed Paper India, is making Indian flags made out of seaweed as a healthy alternative. "We have been working on this for the past four months. First, we got seaweed. Then we converted them into paper, so we used 60 per cent of seaweed and 40 per cent of carbon waste materials, made that into a pulp and eventually handmade paper, which we put to dry over five to seven days. Then we cut it into different shapes and converted them into flags. Even these seaweed flags have two kinds, ones with seaweed in them and the ones without," says Ray.

KNOW YOUR CITY

Arun Prasad, city-based history researcher, unravels interesting facts about Bengaluru in this weekly quiz series. So it's time for you to find out how familiar you are with the city, beyond its heritage buildings, IT parks and the pub culture.

THE QUIZ WILL BE PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY

Send answers to bengalurucityexpress@gmail.com with the subject line 'Know Your City Quiz'

Correct answers and names of first three respondents with right answers will be featured in CE.

- While reminiscing the freedom struggle, some of the prominent activists like H Narasimhaiah, HS Doreswamy, DV Gundappa, KT Bhashyam, Nittoor Srinivasa Rao, Pandit Sudhakar Chaturvedi, from the city too should be remembered greatly for their contribution. Being an educationist, H Narasimhaiah was associated with one of the premier educational institutions in Bengaluru. Name the institution which was also closely associated with the freedom movement.
- Bengaluru has a freedom park in the heart of the city. Freedom Park, a vital green lung-space designed by Mathew and Ghosh Architects was inaugurated and opened to public by LK Advani on February 28 2009. The park today has turned into a vibrant space for protests, gatherings and exhibitions in the city. The space where the park is located has a historical significance too as a well-known heritage landmark (which was shifted to the outskirts of Bengaluru) located here was converted and got a makeover. Guess the historic landmark.
- Of the many places associated with the freedom movement in Bengaluru, the Banappa Park stands tall as an epicentre and the site has witnessed numerous historical events, protests and satyagrahas against the British in the city. The site was vibrant even from the days of Anglo-Mysore wars during the 18th century. The park is named after Banappa, a noted philanthropist who lived in the pete area (old city within the fort) who has donated the land to the Mysore government for public utility. On which side of the Bengaluru fort was the park area located, north or south?

CITY READ

UCO Bank introduces new initiative

UCO Bank in Bengaluru introduced a recognition programme for the beneficiaries of the Pradhan Mantri Swanidhi Loan. They engaged with 50 street vendors, educating them about the government incentive schemes to promote digital transactions. Distribution of sanction letters were carried on to new customers while existing and new PM Swanidhi loan beneficiaries were given QR codes.



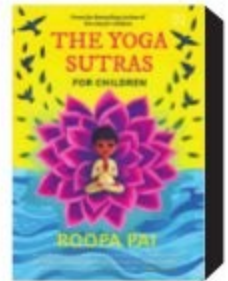
BOOK NOOK



The Bandit Queens

by Parini Shroff

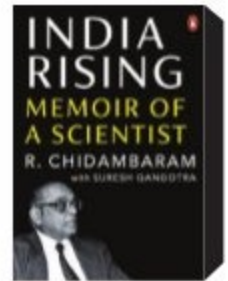
With intelligence, wit, and a certain type of magical irreverence, Parini Shroff portrays the intricacy of female friendship. *The Bandit Queens* is heartfelt, surprising, and filled with hilarious moments.



The Yoga Sutras for Children

by Roopa Pai

The book aims to connect and relate the practice of Yoga to children's everyday lives and helps them use their mind power to bring out the best in themselves.



India Rising: Memoir of a Scientist

by R Chidambaram and Suresh Gangotra

The book looks at the life of one of India's foremost scientists, Dr R Chidambaram, who served as Principal Scientific Advisor (PSA) to the Government of India and as chairman of the Scientific Advisory Committee to the Cabinet (SAC-C) from November 2001 to March 2018.

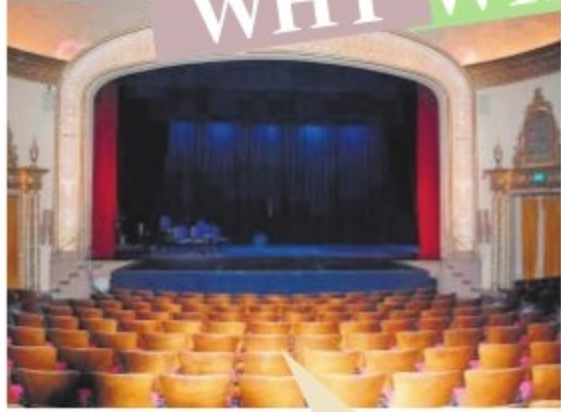


Meru: The Alloy Era

By SB Divya

An epic space opera about aspiration, compassion, and atonement in which one woman and her plot are going to alter the course of the species.

WHAT WHEN WHY WHERE



Theatre Time

The play *Thom Pain* by Will Eno features a solo performer who narrates the story of a dog, a bee sting, and a woman. A 2005 Pulitzer Prize finalist, the play delves into the life of a man who seems to have everything yet nothing.
 ☉ **WHEN:** August 18, 7:30pm ☉ **WHERE:** Jagriti Theatre, Whitefield ☉ **DETAILS:** bookmyshow.com

Monsoon Feast

Indulge in comfort food at a Daysie All Day Casual Bar during this rainy season, with a menu that features mouthwatering dishes like crab dawwada, shrimp cutlets and more.
 ☉ **WHEN:** August 16, 12pm onwards ☉ **WHERE:** Ramana Shree Arcade, MG Road ☉ **DETAILS:** 080-47250000



Break a leg

Join an evening filled with hip-hop dance this Wednesday and immerse yourself in the world of music and cocktails.

☉ **WHEN:** August 16, 8pm onwards ☉ **WHERE:** Hard Rock Cafe, Whitefield ☉ **DETAILS:** bookmyshow.com

On the floor

At the Kaala Chashma event, hosted by DJ Abhijit, experience laid-back ambience, a delectable selection of cocktails and shooters, and fantastic music.
 ☉ **WHEN:** August 16, 8pm onwards
 ☉ **WHERE:** The Boozy Griffin, Marathahalli
 ☉ **DETAILS:** bookmyshow.com



Laughter Riot

Attend Shreekanth Nagaraj's comedy night to end your day with rib-tickling jokes, paired with delicious food and drinks.
 ☉ **WHEN:** August 16, 8:30pm onwards
 ☉ **WHERE:** The Bangalore Dhaba, Kalyan Nagar
 ☉ **DETAILS:** bookmyshow.com



Hum along

Gather in a circle with fellow music enthusiasts, and enjoy an evening filled with soulful music at Lake Lahe's weekly music jam session.
 ☉ **WHEN:** August 16, 7:30pm onwards
 ☉ **WHERE:** Indiranagar
 ☉ **DETAILS:** bookmyshow.com



Play with Clay!

Learn the basics of pottery at this workshop from skilled instructors, and turn raw clay into beautiful works of art.

☉ **WHEN:** August 16, 10am onwards

☉ **WHERE:** Wheel and Potter Pottery Studio, Srinivasa Nagar

☉ **DETAILS:** bookmyshow.com



A STROLL IN AN ART HOUSE

Visitors admire artist Shashi Guleria's works during the solo exhibition 'A Walk Through Nature' at Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath on Tuesday | VINOD KUMAR T

QUICK FIX

APPLE HALWA



Contributed by Thushal Vijayan, Kozhikode

INGREDIENTS

- Apple: 2
- Cashew: 10
- Cardamom powder: 1/2 tsp
- Ghee: 1/2 cup
- Sugar: 1 cup

METHOD

- Peel the apples, remove the core and blend it into a smooth paste and set aside.
- In a kadhai, pour ghee and fry the cashews until golden brown and remove from the pan.
- Pour the apple paste and cook on moderate heat for 3-4 minutes making sure you don't overcook the sugar.
- Once the halwa becomes thick, add cardamom powder and the fried cashews, mix thoroughly and serve once cooled.

What's cooking in your kitchen?

We are hungry for recipes with minimum ingredients and maximum flavours. Share your quick-fix with us, along with step-by-step photos, at bengaluru@cityexpress@gmail.com

FIT BIT

TADASANA NAMASTE BEHIND HEAD

(MOUNTAIN POSE PRAYER HANDS BEHIND HEAD)

This is one of the variations with base pose as shoulder stretches. Since the practitioners have varying abilities, a given yoga pose may be easy for a particular person but hard for another and in such cases pose variations can be done.

STEPS

- First, stand in Tadasana (Mountain Pose), by placing your foot on the ground followed by taking few breaths.
- Make sure that the chest and shoulders are in alignment.
- Bringing the chest out and the shoulders behind, stretch the spine up.
- Inhale, raise and extend your arms, palms and fingers.
- Bring the upper arms closer to your earlobes engaging the shoulders and chest.
- Make sure the shoulder blades are touching each other as you pull upwards.
- Then, exhale, gently bend your arms at the elbows and lower your palms behind your neck.
- Inhale, and elongate your spine.
- Now, exhale and relax your shoulders.
- Inhaling, raise your arms up and exhaling, bring your arms down. Repeat the pose for around 6 times.
- Finally, to release, take a deep inhalation, and as you exhale, stretch the arms outward and release to stand back in Tadasana.

BENEFITS

- This pose gives balance and stability.
- It helps to stretch your elbows and wrists.
- Ensures that the weight is distributed between both feet, grounding all four corners.
- This pose encourages the facial muscles to relax.
- Helps to avoid tension in the neck and shoulders.
- Ensures that the core is actively engaged.
- Engages the entire body and mind, improving overall posture while promoting mindfulness.
- Helps with conditions related to migraine, vertigo, blood pressure, cervical spondylosis, or any other physical condition that brings discomfort when looking up.
- It is a beautiful transit pose in flow yoga sequences.

LIMITATIONS

People who have injuries in the shoulders, wrists, elbows, neck, upper back, or lower back, avoid this pose.
 For those who find raising their arms a challenge, as breathing gets difficult, it is best to hold this posture for a short duration. Senior citizens and pregnant women can use the wall for support while doing the pose.



By N Elumalai, PhD Scholar (Yoga Science) at Meenakshi Academy of Higher Education & Research, Chennai

REGIONAL



VIDUTHALAI (Tamil)

Kumaresan, a police officer, gets caught in the conflict between the government and a revolutionary group as he clings on to his path of righteousness.

Cast: Soori, Vijay Sethupathi, Gautham Vasudev Menon
 ● **Watch on:** ZEE5



BIMBISARA (Telugu)

The film, Bimbisara narrates an epic and grand tale of the transformation of the all-powerful, arrogant, selfish and cruel king of Trikarthala, Bimbisara, into a more humane and selfless individual. There is a king, kingdoms, supernatural elements and time travel.

Cast: Kalyan Ram, Samyuktha Menon, Warina Hussain
 ● **Watch on:** ZEE5

VADH (Hindi)

A story of a middle-class married couple relentlessly harassed by a loan shark after their son moves to the USA. An intense crime thriller written and directed by debutantes Jaspal Singh Sandhu and Rajiv Barnwal.

Cast: Neena Gupta, Sanjay Mishra
 ● **Watch on:** Netflix



AASHIQANA (Hindi, series)

Yash and Chikki stand on different pathways and face unexpected twists. The thrilling supernatural-romance-thriller-drama series navigates the complexities of a world filled with customs facing the darkness that lurks in the shadows.

Cast: Zayn Ibad Khan, Khushi Dubey
 ● **Watch on:** Disney+ Hotstar

All the streaming apps can be accessed on smartphones and smart TVs with Internet connection.

COMMANDO (Hindi, series)

Fronted by newcomer Prem as Commando Virat, the action-thriller show takes Vipul Shah's 'Commando' movie franchise forward.

Cast: Adah Sharma, Vaibhav Tatwadi, Shreya Singh
 ● **Watch on:** Disney+ Hotstar



INSPECTOR AVINASH (Hindi, series)

Mishra who was powered to stop the crimes in the state, starts a war against the gangsters when the home minister of the state orders the formation of a Special Task Force following a threat of contract killing of the chief minister.

Cast: Randeep Hooda, Urvashi Rautela, Amit Sial
 ● **Watch on:** JioCinema

FOREIGN

MISSING (English)

A teenager is determined to locate her mother who mysteriously vanishes during a vacation in Colombia with her new boyfriend. Fueled by love and concern, June embarks on a journey fraught with uncertainty having to traverse unfamiliar terrain and encountering unexpected challenges in her quest to unravel the truth and reunite with her beloved mother.

Cast: Tim Griffin, Ava Zaria, LeeNia Long
 ● **Watch on:** Netflix



AMERICAN BORN CHINESE (English)

Based on American cartoonist Gene Luen Yang's graphic novel of the same name, a typical high school story soon evolves into something else as we follow a student struggling to fit in the crowd, till an otherworldly mythical god becomes his new friend. Together, they set out on a quest to save the world.

Cast: Ben Wang, Michelle Yeoh, Stephanie Hsu, Poppy Liu
 ● **Watch on:** Disney+ Hotstar



THE HORRORS OF DOLORES ROACH (English)

Dolores spends 16 years in jail and is eventually released. Returning to gentrified Washington Heights, she reconnects with an old friend.

Cast: Justina Machado, Alejandro Hernandez
 ● **Watch on:** Amazon Prime Video



EMPIRE OF LIGHT (English)

Set in the 1980s on a scenic south coast of England, a duty manager at a seaside cinema, grappling with her problems, develops a connection with a newly hired employee. Their relationship unfolds against the backdrop of the coastal setting as they navigate personal struggles and emotions during this period.

Cast: Olivia Colman, Micheal Ward, Colin Firth
 ● **Watch on:** Amazon Prime Video

NOW STREAMING



Netflix: ₹199/month
 Prime Video: ₹299/month
 aha: ₹699/year
 Disney+Hotstar: ₹899/year
 JioCinema: ₹999/year
 Mubi: ₹299/month
 ZEE5: ₹699/year
 SonyLIV: ₹299/month

Goodbye, dear laptop!



HRIDAY RANJAN
 Urban Bourbon

(Writer, comedian)

MY laptop has been in the ICU for a while now, and I have been feeling terrible. While I've quit alcohol and am focusing on my health, my laptop is coughing and sputtering while performing basic tasks. Truth is, laptops never peaked into their final form. They came into our lives as a transition between personal computers and smartphones. And hence, they ended up being neither here nor there. Most laptops spend a few days frolicking in cafes and parks, before eventually settling into the comforts of being a desktop that sits at home.

PCs had an aura of their own. Remember when the first computer came into your home? Everybody was in awe, and the machine was dressed in protective layers of clothing like a newborn baby. In school, we were asked to take off our shoes before entering the computer labs so that the computers weren't infected by a virus! The room in which the computer sat was cleaned every day, and the device itself was treated like a time machine. Every time my grandma saw me in front of the Windows 3D Pipes screensaver, she assumed I was a Silicon Valley wizkid!

On the other hand, smartphones changed the way we deal with the world around us. Everything from gaming to personal banking made the switch to these handheld miracles. Smartphones proved that it wasn't just the rich who could create works of art, and along with Jio, revolutionised the way Indians communicated with each other. Laptops unfortunately sat bang in the middle of these two innovations.

Ads for laptops showed slim, smiling professionals carrying the laptop and working from the moon to show the laptop's portability. But laptops were always bulky, and came with appendages like charger, socket, and mouse. This resulted in the bag becoming heavy, and you were in permanent need of a deep tissue massage. Technically, laptops were never the best option for either

gaming or video editing – these tasks were left to the desktop computers. The cameras on laptops were never good enough, and anything shot on them would be rejected by even porn sites for being too grainy. Then there's the anxiety of the battery running out, so you always kept an eye out for the battery indicator. A minor spill could cause permanent emotional damage, resulting in the 'blue screen of death' – that dreaded error message that made you want to tear your hair out in frustration.

We all have that one laptop we bought with our hard earned money. My laptop's keyboard stopped working and so I had to carry an external keyboard for years. The battery was the next to



suffer, and my laptop charger started to seem like a tail that was permanently attached to my body. The speaker was the next to go, which meant that I had to carry a bluetooth speaker with me at all times. All I needed was a CPU, and I would be carrying an entire computer along!

After feeling guilty of cheating on my computing partner, I finally purchased an iPad for my writing needs. It is light, so I don't suffer from 'Tendulkar Syndrome' – a condition where the burden of the entire nation seems to be hanging from your shoulders. I am not constantly looking for a plug point like a hungry meerkat. On Independence Day, I finally liberated my buddy from the life of sorrow and pain. Goodbye, dear laptop! You served me faithfully for seven years, and as a tribute to your memory, I shall never own a laptop again!



PC: NAGARAJA SUBBIAH

We only speak about his privileges, but we don't speak about his burdens. It's easy to say he's a fifth generation dynast, he's this and that... But he's there, because society allows him to, his party allows him to. If the people want to reject him, they will

— Sugata Srinivasaraju, author

LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD

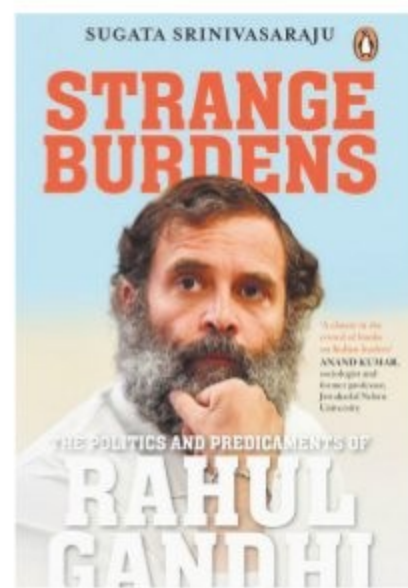
As former Congress president and MP Rahul Gandhi completes nearly two decades in Indian politics, author Sugata Srinivasaraju's upcoming book traces Gandhi's political evolution and ideologies

DESE GOWDA



WITH the 2024 general elections looming large, newly-reinstated Lok Sabha MP and former Congress party president Rahul Gandhi faces, possibly his greatest challenge of his nearly two-decade long political career. Fresh off the Bharat Jodo Yatra, the sixth-generation member of the Gandhi-Nehru family is seen as the de facto leader of the INDIA coalition, which is preparing to take on the might of the ruling BJP-led NDA coalition and by extension, Prime Minister Narendra Modi. At his crucial juncture, journalist-writer Sugata Srinivasaraju's upcoming book *Strange Burdens: The politics and predicaments of Rahul Gandhi* (Penguin India; ₹699) charts the evolution of Gandhi's politics and ideologies.

"I wasn't planning to write this book. It was suggested by



my publisher. I didn't want to write a fully-fledged book yet, otherwise it would have been unfair to Rahul Gandhi. One needs time to meet him, interview him and search through the archival materials available. And he's still young, has never held administrative positions – he hasn't lived a full life yet. He hasn't filled up the archives the same way someone like [former Prime Minister] HD Deve Gowda has. There were a lot of constraints. I'll probably do a proper one at a later point," says Srinivasaraju, who emphasises that *Strange Burdens* is more of a long-ish *New Yorker* style column, rather than a biography.

A veteran journalist with nearly three decades of experience, Srinivasaraju says the book is a political commentary. He makes it clear that he isn't seeking to expose anybody, but rather show the readers alternative possibilities for the events that have transpired. "From day one of his political career, I have watched him – how he behaved between then and 2009, what happened in 2014 and 2019. So there's that experience. You have a larger idea of how things have moved. I'm not a political scientist writing about Gandhi, but my profession has allowed me to look at him closely. That could be my strength but also my limitation. I have no pretensions about anything," he explains, adding, "I don't try to expose

anybody, it's not my style. Rather, I try to keep things out there and allow the readers to make sense of it and guide them to sort of see other possibilities as well."

Despite the obvious significance of the book given the current political state of the country, Srinivasaraju stresses that *Strange Burdens* isn't written with an intention to influence any conversation. "It is taking a closer look at a very important political person at this juncture. Obviously, you cannot talk about Rahul Gandhi without talking about Narendra Modi. There are ample contrasts that come out of the book. But as a writer, I don't fall into these easy polarising black and white elements. For me, the grey is more interesting. I don't think either the Congress or the BJP will be able to make use of this book. I have my share of critics from both sides of the aisle," he adds.

What *Strange Burdens* is doing, according to Srinivasaraju, is looking at Gandhi with critical sympathy. "We only speak about his privileges, but we don't speak about his burdens. It's easy to say he's a fifth generation dynast, he's this and that, and that he needs to vanish from the face of the earth. But he's there, because society allows him to, his party allows him to. If the people want to reject him, they will," says Srinivasaraju, adding that he is most impressed by Gandhi's ability to weather the sheer amount of pain and trauma that he has endured in his personal life.

Long perceived as an ineffectual and inexperienced politician, Gandhi has previously faced criticism for being too conservative with his politics. So is Gandhi up to the challenge that faces him in 2024? "In the last few years, he's been sufficiently radical. He's trying to be an iconoclast, trying to smash a few things. It's unfair to call him conservative in that sense. In fact, if he was conservative, he would have survived better in the Congress Party, which itself is very conservative," says Srinivasaraju.

Joya Chatterji's *Shadows at Noon* focuses on the food and families of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, and shows the impossibility of monolithic 'national cultures'

PARAMITA GHOSH

JOYA Chatterji was the first woman director of the Centre of South Asian Studies at Cambridge between 2009 and 2019. In her new book, *Shadows at Noon: The South Asian Twentieth Century* (Penguin India), she talks of the 1971 India-Pakistan war as her first political memory, looking out from the darkened windows of her Delhi home. The book is a juxtaposition of South Asian families – including her own, where kids are indulged but not daughters-in-law, to bandit households like Phoolan Devi's that were on trees, to the crisis in the former Nepali royal family – from the British Raj through Independence and Partition to popular culture representations. The *Ramayana*, she says, "In many ways, is like a Hindi movie" with a moral centre, the 'pure woman' committed to an upright man, even patriarchy, and the inevitable "baddie". But the big argument of the book is why throw all of one's might behind a single-toned 'Indian' identity when in reality we all lead South Asian lives. And also continue the quibble of who makes the "best" biryani! Excerpts:

'South Asia's 20th century not a Greek tragedy'



The 1971 Indo-Pak war



A biryani from Tamil Nadu

Why did you choose to write a book that straddles both historical scholarship and popular history-writing? The story to be too important to be limited to the 4,000-odd readers of the average academic work in history. It deserved a larger audience – hence the aim to write in an accessible voice. But because that overarching argument is so novel and controversial, I knew it had to be grounded in rigorous research. Otherwise it could easily be brushed aside.

Why is it politically significant, especially now, to devel-

op the vision of a South Asian Twentieth Century?

There is a question mark over the nation worship that is the new civic religion in this part of the world. What *The South Asian Twentieth Century* seeks to do, captures all that and more: to draw a subtle comparison with 'the American century', 'the Age of Extremes' (on Europe's 'short twentieth century'), and so on. I am also making, and invite the reader to make, global comparisons and connections.

You have shown in great detail how food – in terms of dietary prohibitions, and



Kaagaz Ke Phool stretched Guru Dutt's finances

purity and pollution – has been central to the caste order, and the sectarian politics.

States have tried to nationalise diets but with limited success. The market has had a larger hand to play in standardising diets, in elevating rice and (to a lesser extent) wheat to the top staples consumed right across South Asia.

The refugee movement has also been important. The place of Punjabi food in Delhi is only the most obvious example of it, while in West Bengal, eastern varieties of dishes (hotter, more spicy) are devoured by western Bengali non-refugees with enjoyment, but some bafflement. Regional variations across environments persist, of course. The case of biryani is a great example here. Every rice and meat-eating region across South Asia has its own 'best' biryani. Each is different from the other. We also have the strange story of the very popular 'veg biryani', and debates about whether it is okay to make biryani with potatoes or not.

Would you say that the book is informed and underpinned by a tragic sensibility, as seemingly suggested by the title? I have recognised on reflection that I do write books in tropes. Indeed, I see tragedy in *South Asia's Twentieth Century*. Not as in Greek tragedy, in which

characters are doomed from the start, because the unfolding of South Asia's tragedy was not inevitable.

You claim that the term Bollywood to describe the Bombay film industry acquired currency only in the neoliberal period and is misleading in the comparison with Hollywood that it presupposes.

The Bombay cinema of the '40s to the '80s was fundamentally precarious. Producers were dependent on loan sharks, distributors and exhibitors. Women stars were hard to find, given the societal concerns about women's purity. Filmmakers had to entertain, with song-and-dance or complex fight sequences with mythological tropes. For instance, director-producer-actor Guru Dutt nearly went bankrupt after he made a movie that pushed the boundaries. He personally took all the risks, while exhibitors broke even or made a modest profit on most films. This was Bombay cinema not only because it was set in Bombay, but because it was never about realism, it did not resemble Hollywood remotely: in shape, form or content.

In the 1990s, Bombay cinema was recognised by the state as an industry, and as such, was free to seek loans from banks, and given state support for the purchase of raw stock. It then began to boom, and in doing so, it sought out novel markets: an audience in the diaspora, in conjunction with the multiplex-theatre viewing booming middle-class public, as well as the large halls of old. This conjuncture, I believe, turned 'Bombay cinema' into Bollywood, a hybrid form much more in tune with the realism of Hollywood (but not entirely). Its biggest hitters outdid, and continue to outsell, many Hollywood movies.

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS CLASSIFIEDS

PUBLIC NOTICE

CHANGE OF NAME

CHANGE OF NAME
 I, ABHISHEK S, aged about 28 years, S/o. Shaikh Sherif, Residing at No.33, 8th Cross, Pipe Line Road, Santhosh Nagar, T. Dasarahalli, Bengaluru North, Bengaluru-560051, Karnataka, do hereby declare and state that even though the names "SHARIF S" as appears in my SSLC Marks Card with Register No.20110871865, "SHAIKH SHARIF" as appears in my Aadhaar Card No.2292 0155 6920 & PAN Card No. DDMPT1889E and "SARIF ABHISHEK" as appears in my Voter Identity Card No. JM02119055 REFER TO SINGLE PERSON, THAT IS, MY FATHER ONLY, BUT HIS CORRECT NAME AS PER MY SSLC MARKS CARD IS "SHARIF S" vide Affidavit Dated: 14/08/2023 duly Sworn to Before Sri. Ramasangeeviah, K.V. Advocate & Notary Public, Govt. of India, Bengaluru.

AFFIDAVIT

I, H.R. MOHAN KUMAR S/o Late K.H. Raju, age 51 years, R/Rt No. 74/B-2, Banaka Apartment, 17th A Cross, 4th Block, 4th Stage, Basaveshwara Nagar Police Station, WDC Road, Basaveshwara Nagar, Bengaluru-560 075 do hereby declare that in my son's passport his name is wrongly mentioned as AMIT MORE instead of AMITH MORE and my name is wrongly mentioned as MOHAN KUMAR instead of H.R. MOHAN KUMAR, vide affidavit dated 10-8-2023, sworn before Advocate and Notary S. Vijaya Kumar at Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, T. MAHALAKSHMI W/o Late Vidya Sagar Jalamadugu, residing at No. G-9, 4th Main, 4th Cross, KSRTC Layout, Chikkalassandra, Uttarahalli Main Road, Bangalore - 560061, have changed my name as LAKSHMI SAGAR JALAMADUGU, vide affidavit dated 14-08-2023 before Notary Public ARAVIND PATIL G.G., Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, (OLD NAME) REMYA PRAMOD Spouse of NO 15320592F L/HAV PREMOD KUMAR, Residing at Niravathu House, Paivally, Bhagam, Omallor (Vill & Post), Pathanamthitta (Dist), KERALA (State), PIN: 689647, Have Changed My Name to (NEW NAME) REMYA .P, Vide Affidavit Dated 08.08.2023 Sworn Before Notary S.I. BALAGURU BANGALORE.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, (OLD NAME) MAGESHWARI.D Spouse of NO 16113008H HAV DHAMODHARAN.E, Residing at 96D KKC Road, Krishnapuram, Somanur, Somanur (Post), Sulur (TK), Coimbatore (Dist), TAMIL NADU (State), PIN: 641668, Have Changed My Name to (NEW NAME) MAGESHWARI B.Vide Affidavit Dated 14.08.2023 Sworn Before Notary GANGARAJU.B.N, BANGALORE

CHANGE OF NAME

I, (OLD NAME) VARADA GOVINDAMMA Spouse of NO 16127552P SPR S. NARESH, Residing at Halli No.7/15, Venkatam Halli, Mettupalle (Vill), KURNOOL (Dist), ANDHRA PRADESH (State), PIN: 518221, Have Changed My Name to (NEW NAME) VARADA GOWRI, Vide Affidavit Dated 14.08.2023 Sworn Before Notary GANGARAJU.B.N, BANGALORE

CHANGE OF NAME

I, (OLD NAME) SOUMYA JAYAN Spouse of NO JC- 313442W SUB JAYAN.V Residing at House Harivallam Puthen Veedu, Post-Kollemcode, TK- Vilavancode, Dist- Kanya Kumari, State- TAMIL NADU, PIN: 629160, Have Changed My Name to (NEW NAME) SOUMYA.S, Vide Affidavit Dated 14.08.2023 Sworn Before Notary GANGARAJU.B.N BANGALORE.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, SHREEDEVI RANGANATH, W/o. RANGANATH L, R/Rt No.132, 3rd Cross, Saptagiri Layout, Kenchenahalli, Bengaluru-560 056 have changed my name to SHREEDEVI RANGANAATHA W/o. RANGANAATHA L vide affidavit dated 14/08/2023 sworn before advocate and notary Mamatha .N.K., Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, RANGANATH L S/o. LAKKANNAIAH, R/Rt No. 132, 3rd Cross, Saptagiri Layout, Kenchenahalli, Bengaluru - 560056. Have changed my name to RANGANAATHA L S/o. LAKKANNAIAH vide affidavit dated 14/08/2023 sworn before advocate and notary Mamatha .N.K., Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, MAHIMA RAMBHAU PAWAR (DOB: 16-08-1996) W/o Mr. Srivatsa G R/o: House No. 308, HARIKRUPA, 7th B Main Road, Near BMTC Bus Stand, Yelahanka New Town, Bangalore- 560064, have changed my name from MAHIMA RAMBHAU PAWAR to MAHIMA SRIVATSA Vide Affidavit dated 14-08-2023 sworn to before Notary Public, G.P. CHAYA, Bengaluru.

AFFIDAVIT

I, MANGALA RAJASHEKAR INDI D/o. Rajashekar aged about 40 years, R/Rt No. 161, Siddarameshwara Temple Road, Jayachamarajapura Arsikere Taluk, Hassan -573126, hereby declare that my names MANGALA INDI and MANGALA R INDI belong to me only, and both names belong to one and the same person, Vide affidavit dated 09-08-2023 sworn before Advocate and Notary L. Gopalakrishna, Bengaluru.

For SMART

CLASSIFIEDS
 Contact : Mr Ravi Kumar
 9886550650
 080-22866893



Vinod Prabhakar

Vinod Prabhakar to headline Arun Kumar's directorial debut

The *Gombegala Love* actor is making his directorial debut with a gangster drama, and an official launch of the film and title is scheduled this Friday



Arun Kumar

A SHARADHAA

GOMBEGALA Love (2013) actor Arun Kumar will be making his directorial debut with an action-packed entertainer starring Vinod Prabhakar in the lead role. The upcoming film is said to be a gangster drama set against the captivating backdrop of Chamrajnagar.

"Contrary to the stereotypical portrayal of Chamrajnagar as the domain of Veerappan, this movie aims to shed light on the lesser-known facets of the other gangster stories that have left a significant impact. A refreshing take on the setting, the story will delve into unexplored territory," says the first-time director. The official launch event is scheduled for Friday, during which they plan to unveil the film's title.

Reflecting on his journey into directing, Arun shares, "While I was in the process of transitioning into a director, I coincidentally found myself cast in the film *Gombegala Love*, which was a hit among the audience at the time of its release. This experience became a pivotal point, prompting me to wait for the right opportunity and compelling content to embark on my directorial expedition. It is in this script revolving around gangsters, I believe it is a perfect launchpad for my directorial aspirations."

Along with Vinod Prabhakar, the film features Gopal Krishna Deshpande in its cast. With an ongoing process to finalise the remaining ensemble of actors, the makers plan to consider fresh, emerging talents. The project, backed by producer BM Sreeram (Kolar) has key technicians on board. Accordingly, the film has cinematography by Prajwal Gowda and music by Bharath BG. The dialogues are penned by Hari Mahadev. The action sequences are choreographed by stunt master Ravi Verma, who recently was part of the Bollywood film, *Gaddar 2*.

'COMMITTING TO A PROJECT WITHOUT GENUINE ENTHUSIASM IS MEANINGLESS'

...says Shanvi Srivastava, who is back to the silver screen with a bang, with her upcoming release *Baang*

CE FEATURES

SHANVI SRIVASTAVA'S journey in Kannada cinema kicked off with her debut in *Chandralekha*, and it was followed by the success of *Masterpiece* with Yash, *Tarak* featuring Darshan, *Mufti* with Sriimurali, the Ganesh-led *Sundaranga Jaana*, and Rakshit Shetty's *Avane Srimannarayana* (ASN).

Subsequently, the actor took a break, except for a role in Dinesh Baboo's *Kasturi Mahal*, a project she admits she took on to satisfy her acting cravings during the pandemic. After nearly two years, Shanvi makes her comeback with *Baang*, set to release this week.

"Post-ASN, I didn't want to be called 'choosy'. But I've always been selective throughout my career. Unfortunately, the arrival of Covid-19 after ASN caused a significant gap of three years. The long absence deeply resonated with the audience. From *Chandralekha* (2014) to *ASN* (2019), spanning eight years with just one film per year, I emphasised my discerning approach. For me to take up a film, it needs to ignite a passionate fire within me. However, I've also been part of a project that didn't evoke that passion, but those mistakes helped me learn. What's the point of filmmaking if it doesn't resonate with the audience? Committing to a project

without genuine enthusiasm holds no value," reveals Shanvi. Speaking about her return with *Baang*, she says it is a modest production that brings together a fresh cast and embraces an entirely experimental approach.

In a notable departure, Shanvi debuts as a gangster in a dark crime comedy. Explaining what drew her to this role, she shares, "The script carries a unique quirkiness, a path I never imagined treading. Director Ganesh Sree Parashuram's unwavering belief in my ability to embody the character was both rewarding and challenging. The portrayal diverges from the typical gangster archetype, presenting a diva entangled in the criminal world. The entire project energised me. It took a month to make this decision."

Shanvi, who diligently honed her skills for the film's intense combat sequences. "I delved into horse riding and fully immersed myself in learning martial arts and swordsmanship. This proficiency will undoubtedly enrich my future cinematic endeavours," she asserts, adding, "After viewing the film multiple times, I realised that the perceived intensity by viewers differs from the challenges we faced during filming. The process was undoubtedly physically demanding."

Shanvi argues that gangster cinema holds an enigmatic allure, blending the surreal with



Shanvi Srivastava

reality. "This genre bridges the gap between the unfamiliar underworld and our everyday lives. A vast majority, a staggering 95 per cent of people remain unacquainted with this gangster beyond what they've heard or read. Engaging with a gangster narrative thus introduces an element of fantasy that deeply captivates."

Aside from Shanvi Srivastava, the cast includes music directors Raghu Dixit and Ritvik Muralidhar foraging into acting.

"With *Baang*, a transformative change is evident, one that welcomes the inclusion of budding talents," says Shanvi, adding, "I am open to compelling scripts; here the director's persuasion plays a pivotal role."

While Shanvi eagerly anticipates her involvement in esteemed Kannada productions, the actor, having explored Telugu, Malayalam, and a Marathi film, *Raan-ti*—a remake of *Ugramm*—nurtures aspirations of entering Tamil cinema. "The prospect of Tamil cinema awaits, a chapter I eagerly anticipate. Despite numerous offers, none have materialised as of yet," she signs off.



A still from the film



Samyukta Hornad

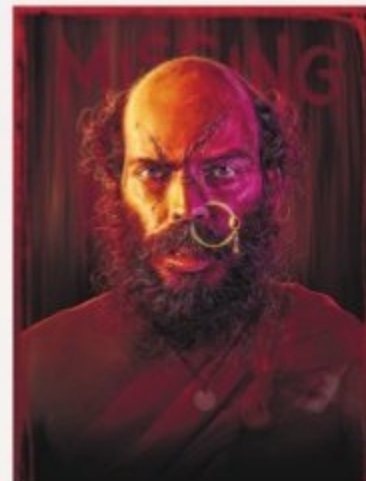
Raj B Shetty is the heart of Toby: Samyukta Hornad

CE FEATURES

CERTAIN films inherently provide the space for the team members to develop a camaraderie. Samyukta Hornad calls *Toby*, which is scheduled to release on August 25, as one such film. "Ranging from the unassuming light boy to skilled technicians and leading actors like Raj B Shetty there was a sense of warmth enveloped the entire venture," says Samyukta reflecting on the project that also stars Chaitra Acharya, Deepak Raj Shetty, Gopal Krishna Deshpande.

"At the heart of this endeavour, stood Raj B Shetty, a person who radiated energy and kept it to himself," says Samyukta, drawing a comparison between her experience on the sets of *Toby* to a ship's crew united under a captain, working together to achieve a shared purpose. She recounts *Toby* was a collective effort that propelled them beyond personal entertainment, and even kept them away from their phones. "The energy on set was electrifying, captivating everyone involved. Additionally, witnessing the vibrant energy emanating from Raj, both as an actor and a human being, instilled a perpetual readiness to perform. We stood united on a mission to conquer, a tightly-knit team bound by dedication. While we may not have formed a family, we were unquestionably a cohesive unit. Finding a team like this, where everyone is passionately committed to a shared vision, is indeed a challenge," she asserts.

Samyukta, while revealing minimal details about her role, delves into the essence of the character, describing it as 'sober and mature.' "Em-



bodying grace and dignity requires immense strength. Embracing a role and bringing the director's vision to life necessitates serene self-awareness. Over the years, I've evolved, and my ability to accept and adapt has prepared me for roles like this," explains the actor.

About being cast for a pivotal role in *Toby*, she says, "Raj's discerning eye recognised my authenticity and honesty. He saw that I remain true to myself, and I could not have portrayed this role naturally otherwise. I was initially nervous around Raj, who gives his all for cinema. Witnessing his dedication compelled me to match his level."

In the midst of her involvement in Sudeep's film *Kichcha 46* Samyukta is content with juggling between Kannada, Tamil, and Telugu films and she is also a part of a couple of web series. In general, she firmly believes that success in the industry transcends mere skills and appearance, emphasising the significance of adopting the right attitude toward life and people. "I've never engaged in games or chased fleeting goals. My commitment has always been geared towards the long haul," she concludes.

NAMRATA JOSHI

BAAN in the Thai language means home. Ironically, Leonor Teles' Portuguese film, *Baan*, which played recently at the Locarno Film Festival, is about the inability to find it, in the world out there as well as deep within oneself. Both its protagonists are vagabonds, on the run from their surroundings but more so from themselves. They meet each other over an ice cream in a cafe in Lisbon. Kay (Meghna Lall) has travelled to Lisbon all the way from her hometown in Thailand. El (Carolina Miragaia) appears to be seeking solitude in her own company. Both, apparently, are disconnected from their families, friends, homes, neighbourhoods, cities,

The long walk home



Film: Baan

CINEMA WITHOUT BORDERS

In this weekly column, the writer introduces you to powerful cinema from across the world

countries, and cultures.

Nothing much happens beyond that. Forget a story and plot progression, though there's a beginning, we don't get much of a middle or end to *Baan* either. Teles' debut feature, like Kay and El, has the feel of a work in progress, with women on self-discovery amid overwhelming urban isolation at its core. It is not so much a conventional narrative as it is about the evocation of existential angst that stretches beyond cultural divides. It is a universal feeling that envelops human beings irrespective of where they come from, where they are located or where they want to go. The film is all about the absence of a sense of belonging. Something you may not find in your family or circle of friends but come

across it in the comfort of strangers. *Baan* is an itinerant film. It is structured like meanderings that play out as indulgent loops. The inability to belong is reflected in the interminable peregrination that plays out on the screen. These are wanderings in which places and time collapse. Portugal flows into Thailand, Bangkok becomes Lisbon, and past and present coalesce with the future. With El, an architect, as one of its protagonists, the film plays with the cityscape in a style which reminded me of how Tokyo gets framed in Sophia Coppola's *Lost in Translation*. The film shows an outsider's look at Japan. Here Lisbon has a scattered, disrupted feel, seen from the perspective of an insider feeling overwhelmingly uprooted.

The flow of sights and sounds gives it a tactile element that is the real strength of the film. It makes us feel, experience, and confront our shared loneliness. Then there is the topography of the faces that the camera rests on, how it catches fleeting expressions passing through the visages, lingers on the gazes—contemplative, scrutinizing, admiring—and captures the unique way El and Kay hold each other in their own eyes. I just wish one could go deeper into their intriguing relationship. Despite two charismatic actors with arresting faces their bonding doesn't get compelling enough.

The writing could have been more deep and incisive. It doesn't match up to the visual and aural

ingenuity and at times the many conversations get drowned in the clunkiness of words. The reference to the racism faced by Kay is half-baked, doesn't get explored fully and lacks a proper explanation. It leaves one with distracting, pointless questions in the head.

Baan is a film that is consciously experimental and elliptical and deliberately challenging for the viewers, as it goes round and round in circles. It is at once entrancing and puzzling, beguiling, and confounding, esoteric and empathetic when it comes to its focus on the human condition. It is best understood as a film that is not about arrivals but journeys. Like being on a long road one needs to traverse to reach home; or perhaps not.